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R. G. COLLINGWOOD: THE RELATIVE STATUS OF ART,
RELIGION, SCIENCE, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY AS
MODES OF APPREHENDING TRUTH

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Submitted in March 1957 as part of the re-
quirements for a degree of Master of Arts.

(Abstract)

R. G. Collingwood: The Relative Status of Art, Religion, Science, History and Philosophy as Modes of the Apprehension of Truth.

This thesis deals with the provinces of knowledge and the corresponding modes of the apprehension of truth set out in R. G. Collingwood's Speculum Mentis, considering each one in turn in the light of all of his available works as noted in the bibliography.

The origin of art, the development of religion out of art, science out of religion, history out of science and philosophy out of history are traced, and the way in which each claims to be the only source of ultimate truth is discussed. Collingwood's conclusion that truth is only implicitly present in art, religion, science and history whose pursuit of an ostensible objectⁱⁿ each case cannot yield absolute knowledge. This is to be found, he says, only in the self-knowledge of the mind at the level of philosophy; truth then is explicitly recognized as being necessarily self-knowledge, for no other object is completely human factum.

Among Collingwood's emphases to receive attention in relation to the problem of knowledge are the following: the function of imagination, knowledge as question and answer and the consequent need for a dialectical logic, the inevitability of the over-lap of classes in non-scientific thought, knowledge as historical knowledge, the real as the concrete individual and the superficial nature of scientific fact and generalization, the perils of irrationalism, and metaphysics as the science of absolute presuppositions.

Certain objections are then taken to Collingwood's position: the problem of historical relativism, the advocating of the universal application the presuppositions and method of history to all fields of knowledge when he deplores the same application of presuppositions and the method of science in this way, falling into his own definition of dogmatism, the difficulty inherent in his idealist position of finding any link between the knowing mind and the world, the principle of the over-lap of classes needs to be applied to the separation of the provinces of knowledge. It is suggested that Collingwood is in the succession of Locke, Berkeley and Hume.

(Abstract)

H. I. Collinswood: The Relative Status of Art, Religion,
Science, History and Philosophy as Modes of the Appropriation
of Truth.

This thesis deals with the provinces of knowledge and the corresponding modes of the apprehension of truth. It is in H. I. Collinswood's Philosophy, considered as such one in turn in the light of all of his available works as noted in the bibliography.

The origin of art, the development of religion out of art, science out of religion, history out of science and philosophy out of history are traced, and the way in which each claims to be the only source of ultimate truth is discussed. Collinswood's contention that truth is only implicitly present in art, religion, science and history whose pursuit of an objective object each case cannot yield scientific knowledge. This is to be found, he says, only in the self-knowledge or the mind at the level of philosophy; truth then is explicitly recognized as being necessarily all-knowledge, for no other object is completely verum ipsum.

Among Collinswood's emphases to receive attention in relation to his problem of knowledge are the following: the function of imagination, knowledge as question and answer and the consequent need for a dialectical logic, the inevitability of the overlap of classes in non-exclusive thought, knowledge as historical knowledge, the real as the concrete individual and the epistemic nature of scientific fact and generalization, the perils of instrumentalism, and metaphysics as the science of absolute presuppositions.

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CHAPTER ONE: R. G. COLLINGWOOD AND HIS 'PROLEGOMENA'

A history of metaphysics written in terms of those pushing to her rescue would wait for important names.


A place would certainly be made for R. G. Collingwood in such a history, for he was one who had her in peril and hastened to her aid. His concern for her was

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then condemn her to the ignominious exile of poetry and theology, and those who rejected her every contribution as irrelevant or as being without meaning because her propositions could not be verified, at least could not be verified by the tests of the new convention, and who therefore condemn her to the oblivion of nonsense.

Despite the burden of overwork and frequent bouts of ill-health, his work is pervaded by and carried forward by a sense of urgency, of straining energy, and by a buoyant excitement. Parts of his work, which at first sight seem sombre and restrained, on second reading often reveal a quiet academic revel over a topic which he once opposed.



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CHAPTER ONE: R. G. COLLINGWOOD AND HIS 'PROLEGOMENA'

A history of metaphysics written in terms of those rushing to her rescue would omit few important names.

A place would certainly be made for R. G. Collingwood in such a history, for he was one who saw her as in peril and hastened to her aid. His concern for her was all the more acute because he saw metaphysics as constituting the real foundation of this our or any other 'way of life'; our political and scientific progress rests with our ethical and social and even our religious values, he was convinced, on our metaphysical suppositions. The danger? He believed metaphysics to be in danger at the hands of two parties; those who would harness her to a task that she was not equipped by her nature to perform, and who would then condemn her to the ignominious exile of poetry and theology, and those who rejected her every contribution as irrelevant or as being without meaning because her pronouncements could not be verified, at least could not be verified by the tests of the new convention, and who therefore condemn her to the oblivion of nonsense.

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wheel; then a brusque or ironic note points up the challenge and declares that metaphysics is never merely a game for R. G. Collingwood.

This seriousness of purpose and sense of peril notwithstanding, his literary gifts and discipline are such that he is a delight to read. Lucid without oversimplification, he is persuasive without adopting a superior air and prefers grammar and syntax to jargon. Collingwood seems to bring a freshness and originality to every subject that he touches. Perhaps it is too soon to say whether he will prove himself to be the water bailiff who will clear the channels and refresh the flow of philosophy. But surely there can be no doubt that the sparkling clarity of his own speculation is proving a stimulus to some minds to set about the clearing of clogged and caving channels of metaphysical enquiry. And it is equally true that Christian philosophy needs a new assurance, not in the realm of what Christians know to be true, but in the area of how it is known, how it relates to other fields of knowledge, and how it may be given to the world. The first of these areas of enquiry falls within Theology where a tendency toward irrationalism has arisen partly from the real or apparent conflict between religion and science (we shall have to see which it is) and partly from a new emphasis on Biblical literalism. Certain contributions of Collingwood's (not necessarily his conclusions) will prove very helpful indeed both to Theologians and Philosophers. It is said that reflections on any philosopher or school are best written by a devotee.

If one were asked to put down at the outset an indication of the general nature of these contributions, the most concise answer would be that they all have to do with Collingwood's Philosophy of History, and that in an appreciation of his work this term suggests certain principles which are cardinal, both because they are primary in the sense that they are in point of time the foundation of his thought, and because they are also in point of structure both fundamental and all-pervading. But when this has been said, one must hurry to add that because these principles are of such general application, and because of the very close relation of metaphysics to history in Collingwood's thought, the disciplines of metaphysics and even of logic must be explored to set them forth plainly. One's answer to the question, then, would be misleading indeed unless it carried an implication of the tremendous scope of the term 'history' in this context, and in pursuing an enquiry into the exact nature of these contributions, the reader must expect to find himself far beyond the traditional bounds of the subject of Philosophy of History.

Robin George Collingwood was born at Coniston in northern Lancashire in February, 1889; he died there in January 1943 at the age of fifty-three. Toward the end of his life he wrote:

"I am nearly fifty and cannot in any case hope for more than a few years in which I can do my best work. I take this opportunity, therefore, of saying that I will not be drawn into discussion of what I write.

Some readers may wish to convince me that it is all nonsense. I know how they would do it: I could invent this criticism for myself. Some may wish to show me that in this or that detail I am wrong. Perhaps I am: if they are in a position to prove it, let them write not about me but about the subject, showing that they can write about it better than I can; and I will read them gladly. And if there are any who think my work good, let them show their approval of by attention to their own work. So perhaps I may escape otherwise than by death the last humiliation of an aged scholar, when his juniors conspire to print a volume of essays and offer it to him as a sign that they now consider him senile"¹

Collingwood had no pressing need to discourage approbation; it was slow to come and it is only now that some just measure of respect and recognition is being given his work. His was a busy life, varied and full, and his work in many fields is impressive not only for its scope, but for its profundity and originality. It includes very valuable contributions to philosophy of history, metaphysics and ethics, to historiography and archaeology, to art, religion and to political science. He translated important works by B. Croce and G. de Ruggiero from Italian, composed poetry, exhibited paintings, wrote a travel journal on a voyage through the Isles of Greece and held simultaneously for some time posts of lecturer in philosophy and Roman history at Oxford. But his first concern

¹ Collingwood, R.G., Autobiography, Oxford, Clarendon, 1939, p. 81.

was for the metaphysical foundation of our civilization, for the understanding of that foundation by making it explicit, and for the protection of it against the erosion of neglect and the corrosion of irrationalism and positivism. He describes himself, in a not uncharacteristic mixture of proud irony and humble gaiety, at the close of Essay on Metaphysics, as a professional goose crying alarm as the barbarians advance unnoticed on the city.²

The metaphysician generally, and the Christian philosopher specifically finds an ally in Collingwood because he, too, is concerned to turn back the attack of irrationalism on metaphysics. It is therefore at first sight disturbing for both to find that the opening line of Collingwood's first mature work, Speculum Mentis, is that "All thought exists for the sake of action"³. What less promising beginning can be imagined, when one considers the unhappy fate of metaphysics in its rough handling by the radical empiricists, and more recently by the positivist extremists - and their betrayal of mind's highest faculty by the 'Principle of Verifiability', and whose kind suggestion it is that Metaphysicians produce only confusion and Metaphysicians? A moment's reflection, however, should be enough to convince the reader that it is not enough that the philosopher should be able to answer the impudent question 'Is Metaphysics?' with assurance, but it is equally important, at least for the Christian philosopher, that he should be able to answer the question 'Is Metaphysics for anything?' with a resounding affirmative. It may be supposed that the first question

2 Collingwood, R.G., Essay on Metaphysics, Oxford, Clarendon, 1940.

3 Collingwood, R.G., Speculum Mentis, Oxford, Clarendon, 1946, p. 15.

lies within Theology, the second within Apologetics as well, and has therefore a larger application. More than even the vital question of the Metaphysician's bread and butter is involved here, then. And Collingwood follows in the ancient and venerable tradition of the Platonic Socrates in asserting that Philosophy has a contribution to make - of the greatest importance - to man and his civilization, for he regards Philosophy not as a subject, but as a way to be followed, not as a hobby for some without aptitude for more productive endeavors and with an assured income, but for all men everywhere for the understanding of one another, and as admission to the drama of the past, the arena of the present and the justification for our troubled hopes for the future. This point of view, which he shares with Father Socrates, ought to make the fate of metaphysics a matter of no mere academic concern, but a matter of grave academic concern to artists and critics of art, to leaders in religion, science, history and to those in pursuit of wisdom and excellence in all branches of Philosophy and indeed in all walks of life.

By this watchword: All thought exists for the sake of action; Collingwood would summon philosophers from a search after 'truth for its own sake', a form of self-indulgence deserving the empiricist's scorn, to a search after 'truth for the world's sake'. It is past time the philosophers left off talking only to one another, and began to talk to people in all vocations of life. It is past time the philosophers left off strewing flowers in the path of the advancing prestige of the scientific method and dropped a few thistles along the way to

remind the scientist that this is not all of life. Collingwood admits that one of the primary reasons why philosophers began to talk to themselves is because no one else would listen, anyway, and the obvious observation would be that so often they have not been saying anything worth listening to. But this is unfair. Is it because they have been concerning themselves with questions which the audience is not asking? This is sometimes, but not always the case. Is it then perhaps because philosophers have not begun with the common experience of men and women and worked toward the fulfilment of their promise? Has Philosophy, in its concern for the technical and scientific, defaulted in its primary task of leading men into the good life? Collingwood feels that this is indeed the case. If he is right, then more than an improved methodology is required to set it right, what is needed is a concern for persons. What is needed is the liberation of men from the oppression of the mass, from the impersonality of the machine, from the abstraction of science, and the establishment of his particular individuality not by shallow psychological trickery or by superficial religion but by the encouragement of a passion for the ancient virtues 'natural' and 'theological', for considered and responsible participation in the past, the present and the future.

Before Philosophy may hope to succeed in the task thus set before her, the scope and method of philosophy must be set out, and the relations between philosophy and the other vessels of truth made plain. This is the purpose and goal of Speculum Mentis. Here Collingwood purposes to review the forms of human experience systematically. These forms he believes to be Art, Religion, Science, History and Philosophy. He believes, more-

over, that these forms of experiences are systematically related, Art being the primary form, and every other form arising out of the one named immediately before it.

The first really significant point which he takes pains to make is that each of these forms of experience is a separate concrete activity, not simply an abstract description of a common activity, and that because this is so, each one, in some sense and to some degree is a means of apprehending truth. Thus, while art and religion, history and science, all profess themselves concerned with the truth and its revelation, they are not talking about the same truth. Beauty is not God, nor is natural law the rediscovered occasion of history. Everyone feels a predisposition to agree that if one must reluctantly yield the conviction that truth is truth, all one, then one must at least uphold the proposition that all truth is at least systematically related. Collingwood himself holds this position, though not in the usual form of the proposition; i.e., he does not hold a theory of faculty psychology with a truth discovered by (or in) each faculty. Rather the truth of art and the 'higher' forms are in a sense related by emergence out of one another. The 'highest' form of truth, is the truth, then, of philosophy: 'the absolute self-knowledge of the mind'. The 'lower' forms are all involved implicitly, and unaware, in attempting to state what philosophy explicitly and consciously states, that all we really know, we know about the human mind. This is not to say, however, that the 'lower' forms have not their own integrity; for the artist, Beauty is all the truth there is, the more able and less superficial an artist

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he is, the more emphatically will he deny that his truth is an aspect of or an approach to a superior truth.

Collingwood agrees that the selection of these five forms for the apprehension of truth may be arbitrary, but he defends his choice as one based not on a priori considerations, but as one based on observation of what we do mean when we talk about truth, and what activities we undertake when we wish to arrive at or express truth, and he is willing to add to this list of forms, if anyone can show just cause, - though it may be suspected that he would be chagrined indeed if it proved necessary after everything worked out so nicely. The succeeding chapters will deal with these modes of the apprehension of truth in turn, and an effort will be made in each case to discover whether or not each is a mode of the apprehension of truth, whether or not it is related to the other modes in the manner Collingwood suggests, and whether or not the truth so apprehended is what Collingwood believes it to be.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, certain of Collingwood's own questions will be asked of him, and some remarks will be made on the quality of these thoughts as 'Prolegomena' in the light of Collingwood's high purpose for philosophy.

CHAPTER II: ART AS KNOWLEDGE

Everyone argues about art. The simplest, but perhaps the most^{est} profound because they are the simplest, arguments take place at the unsophisticated level of exchange in which one of the parties to the discussion says arrogantly, candidly or defensively, 'I know what I like', and another talks muddled sincerity about 'good art'. Both parties are least partly aware that they are not talking about the same thing. The area of greatest conflict centres around the word 'taste'. 'Good taste' is presumably where 'I know what I like', some natural receptivity and ability to respond, and 'good art', the schooling of aesthetics, meet. Surely most people will agree that excellence of technique is not by itself art, and yet this proposition is an unconscious assumption in much discussion of art. It becomes apparent at the next, more sophisticated level of discussion, where the equation of technique and art is the basis for such phrases of 'efficacy in evoking emotion'.

Here the task of the artist is seen as that of applying stimulus calculated to arouse certain predetermined emotions in the observer. This is obviously some kind of communication, so that art is in some real sense of the word a language. The idea that the function of the artist is to create stimuli planned to arouse certain states of mind in the beholder is a venerable one, being held by Plato and Aristotle among other views, and is a slightly more refined view than that which asserts merely that it is emotions which are to be evoked.

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But, as Socrates pointed out, artists have generally been more reticent about the meaning of their creations than have their critics. If art is a language, then surely we should expect a work of art to communicate something. But again the critics and the cognoscenti are more sure that this is the case than are the artists. The artist sometimes wonders whether art is for anything; he works at it for his bread and butter, but this is a different thing. From the biographies of artists who have lived uncomfortable lives in order to pursue their vocation, it is plain that it is not primarily a livelihood for many of them. What about 'art for art's sake'? Is this any more than a refusal to discuss the question, and an attempt to take refuge in a tower of sophistication? For art here refers to a personification of some tyrannical mistress standing apart from the artist, and no such being exists. Collingwood, who painted (it is difficult to determine how well) and was never one to write out of ignorance, declared for the artist against the critic, and protested that art is not for anything. The artist is only secondarily a producer laboring to supply a consumer, primarily art is accomplished for creation of it, as a game is played without purpose but only for the sake of the game.

Nevertheless one understands some artists at least to claim that their work is a vehicle of truth. The easiest interpretation of this claim is to agree, 'Ah, yes, this is an accurate reproduction of real things in a real world, and hence it is a true picture of things as they really are'. A more sophisticated reply is perhaps to say, 'This tells me exactly how you felt and

thought as you were affected by this situation, and because it is historically accurate it is therefore true'. Is the truth of art in the accuracy of its representation, an accuracy which goes beyond the clumsy description of language to the more immediate communion peculiar to art? No, the truth which art claims is not in its character as means of faithful and precise representation. This is not to deny that a good deal of art is representative, though by no means all, but it is to deny that all representation is art. The nature of a thing which makes it a good representation is not the same as the nature of the thing which makes it a good work of art.

Indeed Collingwood holds that, so far from being representative, art is the product of the imagination,⁴ imagination free and fanciful, beyond arrest by logic or reality. The uninhibited imagination plus the attempt to express the content of consciousness is art. Art is language, again, but it is language whose subject matter is fantasy, beyond the appraisal of reality.

If the content of art is imaginative, and therefore to a degree private, why does the artist attempt to communicate it? Because in the attempt to express the flights of his fantasy he discovers and enjoys more of the emotion and state of mind entire which is the product of the activity of his imagination. Art is grounded in the imagination but enjoyed

⁴ It would be rather surprising to find a person taking the subjective idealist position R. G. Collingwood seems sometimes to hold in the extreme, adopting a representative theory of art.

emotionally,⁵ and the enjoyment is increased by the attempt to express the creation of the imagination. There is no ready-to-wear language for this purpose, but it must be crafted for the subject at hand. So that, if art is for anything, it is for the enjoyment of creating and using this language, a language(for the most part)of the moment created for the immediate need, in an attempt to communicate something essentially not amenable to the procedures of communication. That which he seeks to communicate, it has been observed, is not thought, but emotion, or a state of mind, and this simply for its own sake.

Recall again the opening sentence of Speculum Mentis: "All thought exists for the sake of action". Is all truth contained in thought? The artist claims that his activity leads to knowledge. Yet artists have often been indignant or embarrassed by the demand that their art should be 'for something'. Collingwood holds that they are wrongly so exhorted, for although their artistic activity or creation is an activity which leads to knowledge, it is not in thought-form. Art seeks truth, but not to express it in thought. It does not exist as thought does for the sake of action, except in so far as it is action for enjoyment, which is play.

The question at once arises as to whether the truth which the artist seeks is the same sought by other truth seeking activities, such as science or religion. Is the truth one reality seen from different points of view, or viewed with

5 Cf. Collingwood, R. G., The Principles of Art, Oxford, Clarendon, 1938, p. 274.

The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work. It is followed by a detailed account of the various projects and the results achieved. The report concludes with a summary of the work done and the prospects for the future.

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The third part of the report deals with the administrative situation of the country. It gives a detailed account of the various departments and the work done by them. It also gives a summary of the administrative results and the prospects for the future. The fourth part of the report deals with the social situation of the country. It gives a detailed account of the various social problems and the work done to solve them. It also gives a summary of the social results and the prospects for the future.

The fifth part of the report deals with the economic situation of the country. It gives a detailed account of the various economic activities and the work done to develop them. It also gives a summary of the economic results and the prospects for the future. The sixth part of the report deals with the military situation of the country. It gives a detailed account of the various military activities and the work done to strengthen the defense. It also gives a summary of the military results and the prospects for the future.

different attitudes? Or even from different altitudes? Or is there a different truth for art, a different truth for religion? That is to say, are Beauty, God, Natural Law, if we should agree that they all represent or are in themselves truth, somehow the same? Or at least different aspects of the same reality? Collingwood argues that in a sense they are, but that the cognitive activity by which each is arrived at is incompatible with all the others. To enter wholeheartedly into the vocation of art is to deny religion and science. To be a thorough-going scientist is to reject the claim to reality of Beauty and God.

This is so because the mind of the scientist is not at all the mind of the artist. Art springs from the childlike, primitive, unsophisticated mind; it is the product of pure imagination. The object of art is an imagined object, and the artist is not concerned about the reality or unreality of his object, for he lives and works during the period of this activity of creation, not in a world of laws and facts, but rather in a world of fantasy of his own making.⁶ But what then, of the artist's claim that his work is a vehicle of truth?

The answer must be that, just as our dreams have an apparent continuity with our waking experience, so there is plainly some continuity, though it may be difficult to trace in non-representative art, "between the artist's imaginings

6 Speculum Mentis, p. 96. "The difference between art and dreaming is only that the artist is aware that his fantasies have a structure,.... A dream that is constructed systematically in an explicit manner is just a work of art."

and his experiences as a member of the world of facts...."⁷ But the connection is there: the artist does his imagining in an environment of events. The independence of imagination is therefore only apparent. There can be truth expressed in and through beauty, but it is not truth about an autonomous world of imagination, the imaginative construction is the vehicle only. "When Socrates asked the poets what their poems meant, they could not tell him, and he noticed with amusement that the bystanders were far more ready with an answer than the writers themselves; but neither Socrates nor the poets hesitated for a moment to admit that the poems mean something, and something other than what they said".⁸

If art, then, is a vehicle of truth in its intention, can it be judged to be successful or effective in its avowed purpose? No more in our time than in Socrates. The meaning simply cannot be extracted from the work, - so that the work, while it has an air of import so that people stop and ask 'What does it mean' still cannot quite tell them. The critics, the scientists, can begin to describe the subtle assertion put forward, but not even the artist can altogether succeed, and the work of art is apt to be destroyed before the audience in the attempt to clarify it.

Is the work of art a closed world, a microcosm in

7 Ibid., p. 74. This is, of course, necessary not only because the artist does not work in complete isolation, no matter how he may withdraw from the world of tooth-aches and runny-nosed children, but also because in order to be involved in the search for truth he must be involved in the world. Truth must be about reality.

8 Ibid., p. 88.

fantasy, privately admitting only the creator? This does not follow; the truth, that is to say also the beauty, or the assertion, of a work of art can be made available to the individual admirer in his participation in the work. The spectator must allow the work of art to evoke in him the emotion which the artist enjoyed at the time of its creation, together with his reflection on it, until for the moment the artist and the admirer are one. "There is no distinction in kind between artist and audience"⁹ It is not enough that we should experience the emotion, note, but we must be removed far enough to comprehend emotions as experienced. The mere ability to evoke emotion Collingwood calls Magic.¹⁰ These emotions are not simply animal or 'primary' ones alone, but "...if we examine any work of art we like to choose, and consider what emotions it expresses, we shall find that they include some, and those not the least important, which are intellectual emotions: emotions which can be felt by an intellectual being".¹¹ "They are emotional charges not upon a merely psychical experience, nor upon experience at the level of mere consciousness, but upon the intellectual experience or thought in the narrower sense of the word".¹²

It is not enough, then that the artist should be able by his skill to evoke emotion, he is required to wed to the form vehicle of emotion some unutterable truth. It is in the

9 Collingwood, R. G., The Principles of Art, Oxford, Clarendon, 1945, p. 151.

10 Ibid., p. 53.

11 Ibid., p. 292

12 Ibid., p. 294

consolidation of the two that beauty arises, a unity so close that it can deny the distinction that is always threatening to develop. "The secret revealed in art is a secret that no one can utter....; in the actual aesthetic experience we clasp it to our bosom in an ecstasy of passion and try to make it inalienably ours.... At the crowing of the cock it vanishes".¹³

This sketchy account of Collingwood's original and penetrating thoughts with reference to Art, Artist, and Audience, cannot begin to do justice to the matter, but may be full enough to give some indication of the importance, in this conception, of imagination, both in the mind of the artist and of his audience. Imagination is a function of an individual even when it is stimulated by moving pictures, for example, or by television for a mass audience. Surely art is distinguished from mere story-telling or from propaganda by the wealth of imaginative fantasy it stimulates in the audience, and by its refusal to assert its reality. And yet imagination is prompted by, and works out of a background of reality. And again, participation in the appreciation of art as a whole person, not only emotionally and certainly not solely intellectually, in order that the truth with which art is pregnant but cannot bring forth, may still be shared, is most necessary.

Art, then, is a mode of the apprehension of truth. But it is a truth which cannot be defined or described. It is truth as there is truth in a dream, a dream which reveals on reflection far more about the mind of the dreamer than appears at first sight. As a dream is a revelation of the mind of the dreamer,

¹³ Speculum Mentis, p. 108.

the creation of the artist is a revelation of the mind of the artist. Art is a message from mind to mind, with emotion as the vehicle because it is only emotion which the artist can evoke in another's mind. Logical propositions, scientific descriptions cannot undergo the transition and are left behind if entertained at all in the mind of the artist. Is what is left worth terming knowledge, truth: Collingwood thinks it is because it brings knowledge of the human mind, and for him this is the highest, and in the final analysis the only absolute, object of knowledge.

This is surely what is behind the kind of talk which describes art as the universal language. In describing it so, one does not mean that everyone recognizes a tree as a tree and so on, one does mean rather that art does succeed in making men known to one another without a word or a gesture, - not fully known, of course, but well enough so that they recognize not trees and stones but another mind.

Collingwood held that there are two forms of thought, (1) intellect, having to do with the relations between facts and proceeding by inference, and (2) consciousness, the immediate awareness of individual facts. Art has to do with the pursuit in consciousness of the individual self-contained fact. "Art is knowledge, knowledge of the individual".¹⁴

¹⁴ Principles of Art, p. 289, and c/p. 293.

CHAPTER III: RELIGION AS KNOWLEDGE

It is not often, these days, that Christian philosophers receive encouragement for their view of religion as a form of knowledge, and it is therefore heartening to find Collingwood admitting their contention. It is in his view not the best knowledge, for it is metaphorical and below even the abstracted knowledge of science in the progress of mental growth toward self-knowledge, but in this age of enthusiasm for the irrational every suggestion of support must be enthusiastically welcomed. Religion, superficially considered, seems to be taken to be, for all intents and purposes, one or more of the following: (1) an attitude of mind toward the mysterious, unknowable, even Romantic Smith Brothers type 'father', (2) an attitude of mind toward people as a whole, an unrealistic sentimentalism, (3) a stern and rather unworkable ethical system, (4) a metaphysical foundation for nationalism and/or capitalism and/or democracy.

The enemies of the conception of religion as a form of knowledge are numerous enough without the camp: the positivist irrationalist psychologists and sociologists, the Marxists, the Freudian psychologists, the abstractive inductive anthropologists and so on. But the enemy is within the perimeter as well, and all the more dangerous for this. He is to be found as one who sharply distinguishes, indeed opposes, reason from revelation. He is to be found as one who condemns outright not only Biblical criticism, but even a new translation of the old text. He is to be found as the one who plays up farcical conflict between 'religion' and 'science'.

It is surely the very antithesis of faith to attempt to save religion by condemning reason. All knowledge which is really that, is surely revelation, for whatever is true knowledge is a revelation of the mind of God. Religion, if its knowledge is, after all, knowledge, need never fear any other form of knowledge, except and unless some other form or area of knowledge should attempt to usurp her province. And it is among the tasks of the Christian philosopher to detect and upset such pretensions.

According to Collingwood, when art, desperate over her inability to communicate her truth, begins to declare as real the objects of her imagination, we have the rudiments of primitive religion. The truth which in art could not be stated but only suggested, is crystallized in religion by seizing one of a number of images of fantasy, fixing it, and setting it forth as the truth and the real. Perhaps, for the modern child, the time when he asks whether Santa Claus is real or pretend may mark in a symbolic way the passage from the age of art-imagination to the age of primitive religion.

The second characteristic of religion as opposed to art is this: Since religion is dependent upon assertion, and assertion involves one in the complications of logical consistence, one no longer has the freedom of the artist to entertain objects of imagination which are incompatible with others held immediately before, after, or even at the same time. Judgement, the either - or, is introduced. And the necessity for consistence is not only individual, but social, as the truth can now be communicated. Thus while for art the secret

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of the universe is the beauty revealed autonomously in many monadic works of art, for religion it is God, and more, God of a certain specific describable character. No doubt a large element of mystery remains, but certain things may be affirmed of God and certain things denied. And since many people are now sharing their thoughts about the same object there must be either agreement or argument.

As religion develops from art, as it asserts its object, and as holiness develops from beauty, so worship is an aesthetic activity whose object is conceived as a reality. And as there was in art an implicit distinction between form and content, so in religion there is an implicit distinction between symbol and meaning. And Collingwood is quite right in saying that not only are pictures, vestments and articles of church furniture symbols, but so also is much that is said, and that indeed literal and spiritual interpretations of symbolic words and phrases go hand in hand. Or perhaps it would be better to say that the literal meaning is itself a symbol.

Collingwood feels that once the distinction between symbol and meaning is understood, religion is explained through theology, and inevitably transformed into philosophy. Thus one by one the theologian takes up the beliefs of religion and explains them as implicit metaphors, until only 'I believe in God' is left, and this credo is the threshold of philosophy. Here Collingwood seems to think that explaining the beliefs as metaphors is the same as explaining them away. All that needs to be said here is that Theology is only a slightly more accurately descriptive and more coherent system of metaphors than is 'common

religion', and that the difference between Theology and 'common religion' is not ~~that~~ an explaining away of the metaphors or, better, analogies, but an endeavor to put down in a systematic way more exactly what they mean. He is right in saying that religion has to do with knowledge, but it is knowledge of the realities which stand behind the metaphors and analogies. It is not the doctrine of the Holy Spirit that gives life to the Church, but the Good Spirit. It is true, ~~of~~ religion, as it is of art, and Collingwood should have been the first to see it, that finally the truth is not available except by participation. This is the explanation of "the great paradox of religion... the fact that religion claims truth but refuses to argue".¹⁵ It is not 'common religion', by which it seems he means the worshipping community, that has the terminology for argument, but Apologetics.

Some consideration has already been given to Collingwood's treatment of religion in the development of the forms of experience; it has been remarked that he sees religion as having something important to say, and believing itself to be saying it when in fact it is uttering metaphorical truths. Religion fails to recognize these metaphors to be such, and believes explicitly in the metaphors' literal phrases instead of in the implicit truth within them, for which they stand. He believes that religious dogmatism arises when someone says, 'Errors apart, the world is what we take it to be, and there is no error in respect to the existence of this God.' Religious dogmatic philosophy is therefore a philosophy which claims special privilege for the assertion of the reality of one object, God, and

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 131.

proceeds to analyze and relate the various metaphorical pronouncements as if they were themselves the truth instead of symbolic of the truth. The arguments of the proponents are not exactly meaningless, but misleading, (with the exception of the ontological argument), and they are therefore very hard to refute, because the opponents are handicapped by the belief that the theologians mean what they are saying literally.

Collingwood holds that atheism is the other side of the coin from religious dogmatism, that both err in mistaking the image for the truth, and that the resolution comes when they stop asking whether or not this religious proposition is true or false, and examine instead its meaning, its implicit content of truth. Religion arises out of the awareness that all is not the product of imagination and that there is something profoundly real and ~~true~~ to be asserted, it dies, Collingwood thinks, with the realization that that which it had thought to be the real and the true is not the real and true as it is, but only a symbol for it. Religion arises in art and dies in transparent symbolism of science. In vain do atheists contend that

It is all too easy to prove the existence of an infinite God who because he is distinct from finite beings is finite; an omnipotent being who because his existence leaves man free to act, is not omnipotent; a loving and good being who because he does not exert himself to protect us against calamity is no true friend; a ruler of the universe whose actual methods of rule, so far as we can see them, are those of a mentally deranged tyrant.¹⁶

Only in the daylight of explicit thought, however distressing that daylight reveals the poverty and squalor of both disputants, can the theist and atheist finish their battle and sign a treaty of peace.¹⁷

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 266

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 270

Collingwood is quite correct in his statement that religion makes a special claim for the existence of one object, God. He is quite correct in indicating that this unique assumption is not subject to attack by argument, and it is equally true that it can not be propagated by argument, but only by the exhortation to "taste and see". The Christians' confidence in the existence of God is not so much based on a system of propositions as it is on 'participation', very much like the participation of the audience in the work of the artist. Religion is very much between art and science - where Collingwood has placed it - in this, that like art its essence is essentially private, and that like science it can be described by public symbols.

Is understanding between individuals ever possible at all without the sharing of experience where real communication is concerned? Christians have always held that we cannot understand one another without love, which means perhaps, among other things, the willingness to so participate, to enter into another, and to permit him to enter into our experiences. Participation is the key to the understanding of individuals; through the function of imagination we are able to share far more than the mechanics of language can convey. The operation of imagination in indirect communication is a familiar thing to everyone, and readily consented to, save for those who wish to set up an artificial univocal language for precision of speech. Such a language would serve only for the simplest directions, commands, exhortations and a few observations, and would in effect place yet another barrier between our understanding of one another. For the much discussed

semantic problem arises not only in the transcendental use of words in philosophy, but in the speech of everyday living, - not only in drama and poetry, but in the careless words to the postman, the taxi-driver, the elevator operator. We are well aware how often we all manage to convey to one another things we do not wish to say, but wish to convey. How awkward it would be with a univocal language: we should either have to say what we wish to convey - if there were symbols for it, or else not intimate it at all!

Who has to contend more often with the difficulties of indirect communication than the philosopher, and especially the philosopher who is at the same time a theologian? Collingwood is wrong in supposing that the Christian philosopher is surprised to find that the words and phrases of Christian theology express their assertions in metaphor rather than in simple identity of word and referent. There is no area in which the symbolic nature of language is not recognized. To suppose, for example, that theologians, even of most literal bent, ever supposed that such symbols as the 'Lamb', or the 'Fountain Filled With Blood' and so on, and the referents to these symbols were identical in the sense that one was an exact description of the other is surely ridiculous. The same thing is true, moreover, where the confusion of symbol for description does not end so obviously at an impasse. It is true that even the names of the Persons of the Trinity are not descriptions in the sense of definitions. No wonder the introduction of children to the Holy Ghost leaves them puzzled. And a Father who is not prior

in time to His Son is confusing. The metaphorical character of theological diction is recognized by all mature Christians, - not only implicitly known, but explicitly recognized. And Collingwood is, then, wrong in thinking that we must abandon religion for science, not because religion is false, but because when we have seen that what we are supposed to have thought all along were definitions are only metaphors, we have outgrown religion. But he is right in pointing out that the recognition of the metaphorical character of theological assertions relieve us of many apparently vexing and even insoluble problems which arise speciously in the unguarded assumption that metaphorical assertions must be coherent and without self-contradiction as simple direct statements of a scientific nature or of a mathematical nature must be.

It is true then, since the assertions of a Christian philosophy must be metaphorical in character, the more so when they are close to the heart of the matter, that imagination is necessary for their understanding. Imagination is the function of the mind which makes indirect communication possible, and the metaphorical speech of philosophy capable of becoming a vehicle for the transmission of knowledge. And the function of imagination is vitally important, therefore, not only as the springboard of the mind, but for the sharing of its discoveries. But it is of paramount importance to make it plain at once that because it has been allowed that the truths of Christian philosophy can be communicated only with the aid of imagination, and in many cases described only through the function of the imagination, this does not mean that they are

known in imagination in the sense that they are the product of the imagination. While God, for example, can only be described by the aid of the imagination, and cannot be defined, He is not imagined only, but known.

Thus the two ancient paths to a description of God are for the instruction of the imagination. They are the venerable methods of negation and of analogy. It is very interesting indeed to note how much the former method manages to suggest in its denials; for example, 'God is not a part of His creation, nor yet is He apart from it'. The method of analogy is the usual method employed in a good deal of familiar indirect speech, - it is a direct appeal to the imagination. There is a third method of describing the indefinable: the approach by way of paradox. Collingwood will be found to say nothing about this fruitful method, probably because it depends often enough on the prohibition of the overlapping of classes for its impact, and Collingwood, who would admit the overlapping of classes, regards paradox as an artificial (which it is) and improper (which it is not) device. Its appeal to the imagination is always dramatic, and it may be said in criticism that there may be too often a temptation to let the tension be displayed in paradox rather than to attack the problem which it suggests.

Collingwood was fond of calling imagination 'the cutting edge of reason'. It is the creative side of the functioning mind, while reason is the analytical side. Imagination represents advance; reason, consolidation. The importance of imagination in arriving at and communicating

1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year, and the second section deals with the specific results of the work.

2. The second part of the report deals with the specific results of the work. It is divided into three main sections: the first section deals with the results of the work in the field of agriculture, the second section deals with the results of the work in the field of industry, and the third section deals with the results of the work in the field of commerce.

3. The third part of the report deals with the conclusions and recommendations. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the conclusions and the second section deals with the recommendations.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the appendix. It contains the following items: a list of the names of the members of the committee, a list of the names of the members of the sub-committee, a list of the names of the members of the working group, a list of the names of the members of the advisory committee, a list of the names of the members of the executive committee, a list of the names of the members of the secretariat, a list of the names of the members of the financial committee, a list of the names of the members of the legal committee, a list of the names of the members of the technical committee, a list of the names of the members of the administrative committee, a list of the names of the members of the social committee, a list of the names of the members of the cultural committee, a list of the names of the members of the sports committee, a list of the names of the members of the health committee, a list of the names of the members of the education committee, a list of the names of the members of the science committee, a list of the names of the members of the art committee, a list of the names of the members of the literature committee, a list of the names of the members of the music committee, a list of the names of the members of the drama committee, a list of the names of the members of the cinema committee, a list of the names of the members of the radio committee, a list of the names of the members of the television committee, a list of the names of the members of the press committee, a list of the names of the members of the publishing committee, a list of the names of the members of the book committee, a list of the names of the members of the library committee, a list of the names of the members of the museum committee, a list of the names of the members of the gallery committee, a list of the names of the members of the concert committee, a list of the names of the members of the opera committee, a list of the names of the members of the ballet committee, a list of the names of the members of the circus committee, a list of the names of the members of the sports committee, a list of the names of the members of the health committee, a list of the names of the members of the education committee, a list of the names of the members of the science committee, a list of the names of the members of the art committee, a list of the names of the members of the literature committee, a list of the names of the members of the music committee, a list of the names of the members of the drama committee, a list of the names of the members of the cinema committee, a list of the names of the members of the radio committee, a list of the names of the members of the television committee, a list of the names of the members of the press committee, a list of the names of the members of the publishing committee, a list of the names of the members of the book committee, a list of the names of the members of the library committee, a list of the names of the members of the museum committee, a list of the names of the members of the gallery committee, a list of the names of the members of the concert committee, a list of the names of the members of the opera committee, a list of the names of the members of the ballet committee, a list of the names of the members of the circus committee.

truth is therefore not to be minimized. There is a sense in which it can be said that the New Testament as a whole answers the questions which the Old Testament asks, and that this is the reason why the Old Testament is read immediately before the New Testament lesson in many communions. Whether it is the whole question or a fragmentary question that is being answered, a sympathetic understanding of the period in which the answer was given and of the people involved is necessary. We cannot, for example, now see the Jesus of the New Testament records through twentieth century eyes, but only through the eyes of the early church. The 'Jesus of History' as purely factual description in the scientific sense is also remote and beyond recovery. If we would see him at all, it can only be through the eyes of the century after his death, with all the contemporaneous cultural and national concern, the apocalyptic expectation and the early theological development coloring the account.

Whether it is ~~with~~ the New Testament or the Old, the Patristic Fathers or Emil Brunner we read, the importance of reaching rapport with the time and situation and personality is so great as to be a determining condition as to whether or not we will understand the sense of what is said, or whether we will be left groping for the questions to which we are given the answers. This is doubly true when the diction employed is such that it is obvious that the devices of simile or metaphor are being used. For example, in order to understand the Parable of the Prodigal Son, it is not sufficient simply to understand the people for whom the parable was written,

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it is necessary as well to enter into the story, participating in the experiences of the people involved. It certainly is not sufficient simply to note the facts of the case: the intractable son, his wilful decision, the generous father, the son's unhappy descent, the father's acceptance of the penitent son on his return. It is necessary to enter into the son's rebellion, feel with him his sense of shame, participate in the father's grief and anxiety, and participate too in his unbounded joy at the recognition of the returning figure. It is only in this way that the message of the parable - the nature of the Love of God can be taught. Love cannot be described in any other way. But the description cannot successfully communicate an understanding of the object without the participation of the reader in the drama; we are made to understand love by participating in the experience, that is, by loving.

Religion is knowledge. True, it is knowledge which must be couched in metaphorical allusion because its communication is not possible without the imaginative participation of the audience. Collingwood seems to be mistaken, however, in supposing that religion is not aware that its communicative efforts are metaphorical - for religion not only knows that this is the case, but knows that it must always be the case.

The first of these was the discovery of gold in California in 1848.

The second was the discovery of gold in Colorado in 1859.

The third was the discovery of gold in Nevada in 1859.

The fourth was the discovery of gold in Idaho in 1860.

The fifth was the discovery of gold in Montana in 1862.

The sixth was the discovery of gold in Wyoming in 1869.

The seventh was the discovery of gold in Utah in 1871.

The eighth was the discovery of gold in Arizona in 1876.

The ninth was the discovery of gold in New Mexico in 1878.

The tenth was the discovery of gold in Texas in 1880.

The eleventh was the discovery of gold in Oklahoma in 1889.

The twelfth was the discovery of gold in Kansas in 1890.

The thirteenth was the discovery of gold in Nebraska in 1891.

The fourteenth was the discovery of gold in Iowa in 1892.

The fifteenth was the discovery of gold in Missouri in 1893.

The sixteenth was the discovery of gold in Arkansas in 1894.

The seventeenth was the discovery of gold in Louisiana in 1895.

The eighteenth was the discovery of gold in Mississippi in 1896.

The nineteenth was the discovery of gold in Alabama in 1897.

The twentieth was the discovery of gold in Georgia in 1898.

The twenty-first was the discovery of gold in Florida in 1899.

The twenty-second was the discovery of gold in South Carolina in 1900.

The twenty-third was the discovery of gold in North Carolina in 1901.

The twenty-fourth was the discovery of gold in Virginia in 1902.

The twenty-fifth was the discovery of gold in West Virginia in 1903.

The twenty-sixth was the discovery of gold in Maryland in 1904.

The twenty-seventh was the discovery of gold in Delaware in 1905.

The twenty-eighth was the discovery of gold in Pennsylvania in 1906.

The twenty-ninth was the discovery of gold in New Jersey in 1907.

The thirtieth was the discovery of gold in New York in 1908.

CHAPTER IV: SCIENCE AS KNOWLEDGE

Collingwood suggests that art and religion can be considered as two phases in the development of language; art as language practiced as an end in itself, - the imaginative play of symbols being mistaken for thought, and religion recognizing that it is assertion alright, but assertion confusing itself with the vehicle of assertion, the symbol. Once the true function of language is realized, that is to say, once it is realized that the symbol should reveal the thought for which it is a vehicle and which is other than itself, and do this so that the vehicle is as transparent as possible, we pass from preoccupation with expression and with the vehicle to preoccupation with thought as that which is communicated and enter the province of science. While art has something to say, then, and cannot say it, and religion says something in symbolism but confuses the symbols with the message, science realizes the function of symbols are to be symbols and concentrates on the invention of univocal ones to convey its thought accurately and unambiguously. The difficulty now is, Collingwood thinks, that science suffers from an inheritance from religion, a bias toward abstractness. He says that the

specific character of science, its abstractness, is due not to reflection on the alternative and the conscious adoption of abstract thought as preferable to concrete, but to an inheritance from religion.... This bias is allowed unconsciously to control its development, and this is why the most primitive thought is not concrete but abstract, not history, but science.¹⁹

19 Speculum Mentis, p. 160

This seems rather an unreasonable and unfair charge to lay at the door of religion and may be claimed to show bias, since surely the abstract concept is the result not of any religious inheritance but is derived specifically from the inductive method of scientific investigation. When one pursues a program of inductive generalization by the scientific method one necessarily ends with an abstract product. He himself admits that science is necessarily materialistic and that materialism is the hallmark of science. Science without abstraction is plainly impossible.

It might be suggested that in Collingwood's terms of reference is it just exactly the univocal symbol of scientific language which makes it so abstract from nature. The artificial language which makes science possible and scientific communication the precise instrument which it is, is a language far removed from the normal language of human intercourse, with its richness and warmth of meaning. The same abstraction from nature that occurs in the normal procedure of scientific method occurs in the language of science.

Any enquiry into whether or not science is a mode of apprehending truth must surely be met with the reply that science is the mode of apprehending truth, in this technological age. It is difficult to put the question without being thought facetious. Such is the confidence placed in science that everywhere someone is trying to place a new province under its dominion until the whole world of knowledge is under the jeweled sceptre, of miracle. This chapter therefore will be content to reflect

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the cold. It was a sharp, biting cold that seemed to penetrate my coat. I shivered as I walked towards the building, my hands tucked into my pockets. The air was thick with the scent of old stone and the distant hum of city traffic. I took a deep breath, trying to steady myself as I approached the entrance. The door was slightly ajar, and I pushed it open, stepping into a dimly lit hallway. The walls were covered in intricate carvings, and the floor was made of polished wood. I walked down the hallway, my footsteps echoing off the walls. The light was low, and the atmosphere was mysterious. I felt a sense of anticipation as I moved forward, knowing that whatever was ahead, it was important.

I reached the end of the hallway and found myself standing in front of a large, ornate door. The door was made of dark wood and was decorated with elaborate carvings. I hesitated for a moment, my hand hovering over the handle. I took a deep breath and then pushed the door open. The room beyond was large and grand, with high ceilings and walls covered in tapestries. In the center of the room was a large, round table covered with a white cloth. On the table were several items, including a small box and some papers. I walked towards the table, my heart pounding. I picked up the box and opened it, revealing a small, dark object inside. I held it in my hand, feeling a sense of wonder and awe. The object was small and unassuming, but it felt like it held a great deal of power. I looked around the room, taking in the details of the architecture and the tapestries. The room was beautiful, but it also felt like it was hiding secrets. I knew that I was in a place of great importance, and I was determined to uncover whatever was hidden here.

I walked back to the door and opened it, stepping out into the hallway. I closed the door behind me and walked back towards the entrance. The hallway was the same as before, but it felt different. I knew that I had discovered something important, and I was determined to uncover the truth. I walked back to the car, my mind racing with thoughts of what I had found. I got into the car and started the engine, driving away from the building. The cold air was still in my lungs, but I felt a sense of purpose. I knew that I was on the right path, and I was determined to follow it. The road ahead was long and winding, but I was ready for whatever came my way. I drove for hours, the sun setting behind me. I knew that I was close to the answer, and I was determined to find it. The road was quiet, and the only sound was the hum of the engine. I felt a sense of peace and tranquility as I drove, knowing that I was on the right path. I knew that I was close to the answer, and I was determined to find it.

on certain limitations inherent in the scope and method and assumptions of science.

First of all, the popular conception of scientific method does not describe accurately the method actually employed by scientists, for as Collingwood points out, it fails to give sufficient place and important consideration to the function of ~~the function of~~ imagination, frequently called supposal in this context. Supposition is not generally considered as a part of the rational process standing under the rules of logic. It has reference, not to the relations between various elements in complex assertions, but to the tentative arrangement of premises in propositions. Most premises are derived, of course, consequentially from other propositions, but every chain of propositions begins and proceeds with supposition. It can hardly be expected that Mr. Ayer will agree with this, for positivists have no place for supposal, but it is nevertheless true.

With his one reservation, logic and its off-shoot, mathematics, seem well designed to serve their master, the exponent of scientific method. But it must be remembered that logic was first put forward as such by the Greeks, whose great gift to west^{ern} civilization was the foundations of modern science. Collingwood raises the question of whether logic which serves so well in science serves as well in the fields of knowledge which are not a part of science, and not served by its method. And indeed, since supposal's function has been overlooked by many exponents of scientific method, had not the whole question of how knowledge proceeds ^{better} ~~been~~ enquired into, and in the face of

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our confidence in the methods of science and our understandable inclination to apply the methods which have ~~won~~ so much success in one field to the whole world of knowledge, to enquire whether or not scientific methodology is applicable to the other provinces of thought.

Collingwood feels that the attitude and mechanics of traditional logic fail to take into account the question and answer procedure by which knowledge is actually gained. Knowledge is gained in the answering of specific questions, and not ^{only} is it achieved in this process it must be stored in this dialectical form. Examination both of people at work adding to our treasury of knowledge and of that store itself will reveal that this is actually the case. But formal logic deals only with half of a proposition, - the answer part, and does this as if it were dealing with all there is. A more adequate logic, a dialectical knowledge is needed to take into account what actually happens when knowledge is actively sought after. Collingwood suggests the basis for such a dialectical logic in An essay on Metaphysics:

Prop. 1. Every statment that anybody makes is made in answer to a question. (By being ~~answered~~ a question does not cease to be a question. It only ceases to be an unanswered question.

Def. 1. Let that which ~~is~~ states (i.e. that which can be true or false) be called a proposition, and let stating it be called propounding it.

Prop. 2. Every question involves a presupposition.

Def. 2. To say that a question 'does not arise' is the ordinary English way of saying that it involves ~~presupposition~~ which is not in fact being made.

Def. 3. The fact that something ~~causes~~ a certain question to arise I call the 'logical efficacy' of that thing.

Def. 4. To assume is to suppose by an act of free choice.

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study and the objectives of the research. It also mentions the scope of the study and the limitations. The second part of the paper discusses the methodology used in the study. It includes a description of the data collection methods and the analysis techniques. The third part of the paper discusses the results of the study. It includes a description of the findings and a discussion of their implications. The fourth part of the paper discusses the conclusions of the study. It includes a summary of the findings and a statement of the author's recommendations.

The study was conducted in a systematic and rigorous manner. The data was collected from a large and diverse sample of participants. The analysis techniques used were appropriate for the data and the research objectives. The results of the study are presented in a clear and concise manner. The findings of the study are discussed in detail, and their implications are explored. The conclusions of the study are based on the findings and are supported by the evidence. The author's recommendations are based on the findings and are designed to address the research objectives. The study has contributed to the understanding of the topic and has provided valuable insights into the issues being studied. The findings of the study are consistent with the previous research and provide a new perspective on the topic. The study has also identified some areas for further research and has provided a framework for future studies. The author's recommendations are based on the findings and are designed to address the research objectives. The study has contributed to the understanding of the topic and has provided valuable insights into the issues being studied. The findings of the study are consistent with the previous research and provide a new perspective on the topic. The study has also identified some areas for further research and has provided a framework for future studies.

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Prop. 3. The logical efficacy of a supposition does not depend upon the truth of what is supposed, or even on its being thought true, but only on its being supposed.

Prop. 4. A presupposition is either relative or absolute.

Def. 5. By a relative presupposition I mean one which stands relatively to one question as its presupposition and relatively to another question as its answer.

Def. 6. An absolute presupposition is one which stands relatively to all questions to which it is related, as presupposition, never as an answer.

Prop. 5. Absolute presuppositions are not propositions.²⁰

The dynamic nature of the question-response dialectic is clear from the manner in which Collingwood takes account of the process by which one proposition suggests another. His examination and description of the way in which thought proceeds is much more accurate and lively an account than is the artificial one grounded in the Aristotelian.

As Proposition 2 indicates, no proposition can be a self-contained question-responses without reference beyond itself. Truth, then, cannot be what the positivists sees it to be, composed of fragments of autonomous events recorded and classified, but it is for each of us, and for us socially and altogether, a body of related material increased not by simple addition, but by growth. A proposition cannot be understood apart from the question it is meant to answer, and again that question is hardly to be understood apart from the complex of presuppositions which are its ground, and which in turn involve others. Collingwood regards this as a proper test of truth, and the basis of the coherence theory of truth rightly under-

20. Collingwood, R. G., An essay on Metaphysics, Oxford, Clarendon, 1940, pp.s. 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32.

stood. If certain propositions are true, then others cannot be, for one cannot at the same time suppose opposites, and every propositions which affirms something denies others. And it must also be true that every proposition which denies something affirms something else. A legitimate question can have neither two contradictory answers, nor involve contradictory presuppositions.

The distinction between truth and falsehood must be decided solely with reference to the question an assertion is intended to answer, if one accepts the principle of dialectical logic; it cannot be adjudged false by condemning the question asked, nor by referring it to another question which ^{it} was not intended to answer. If it can be shown that the question does not arise, then the question together with the answer are simply shown to be irrelevant, specious. The truth or falsity of ^{an} assertion cannot be judged simply by looking at the assertion, but the pair: question and answer, both must be considered together. Traditional logic, in Collingwood's opinion, is rendered quite inadequate by its method which leads it to consider assertions apart.

But the question, 'what question is this proposition intended to answer', is an historical question. In point of fact it seldom arises in science because the question is always in the forefront of the mind. But when the methods of science are applied outside the proper province of science a careless attitude with respect to careful statement of questions and their ^wanswers in pairs leads to ambiguity and misstatement. An historical question must be approached from an historical point of view. The problem of establishing the truth or falsity of a proposition, in every case, is therefore partly a historical question: the identification of the question which the proposition is supposed to answer, and

The first part of the paper is devoted to a general discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The scientific aspect of the problem is concerned with the question of the origin of the organic molecules which are the building blocks of life. The philosophical aspect is concerned with the question of the origin of the life itself. The paper then proceeds to a detailed discussion of the scientific aspect of the problem. It is shown that the origin of the organic molecules is a problem which has been the subject of much research in recent years. The paper then discusses the philosophical aspect of the problem. It is shown that the origin of life is a problem which has been the subject of much philosophical discussion in recent years. The paper concludes by stating that the origin of life is a problem which is still open to debate.

therefore to consider any proposition without careful reference to the question which is its pair is simply to invite disaster.

Collingwood's quarrels with traditional logic ~~is~~ over its inability to recognize the question involved in every statement of fact, to realize that every proposition is really a complex rather than a simple affirmation or denial, involving questions often unspoken and presuppositions seldom recognized. His second area of disagreement with traditional logic, however, is equally significant, and it, like the place of supposal and the question-response nature of logic in our understanding of how knowledge is apprehended, is misunderstood because of the primacy given 'scientific thinking' in the consideration of logic.

This second area of ~~disagreement~~ involves the conception of the nature of the concept itself. Traditional logic is at fault in ~~its conception of~~ the conception of the concept (the building block of traditional logic) because the concept is thought of in terms of a class of instances of some particular characteristic or group of them, the class including all members of the group, and excluding all others. Each separate instance of the characteristic is at once a member of the concept group and an individual instance different in some definite and specific way from every other member of the concept family. The separate instances will be themselves species concepts, and taken together they will exhaust the genus concept.

Now this traditional view of the concept serves very well in the great majority of cases, but it does break down when one seeks to apply it at least to certain philosophical concepts, as Aristotle discovered himself when he discussed

the good. The rules of the game as played by the traditional formal logicians explicitly demand that in no instance can one individual occur in more than one of the concepts relating to the same characteristic. And yet, if certain concepts, perhaps those most commonly used in everyday conversation are among them, are to have their normal range of meaning and usage, they must be allowed to overlap the boundaries of one class to appear simultaneously in others. An act, or a person, can be both good and bad; motives leading to an action may be many: Passion, pride, duty, all at the same time. There seem to be many cases where the traditional classificatory system cannot be admitted to be adequate to deal with the boundaries of classes. The position usually taken in the past has been to view the cases in which the traditional conception of the class has been inadequate as a special case. But on reflection it may be the inescapable conclusion that there, ^{say in ethics,} are ~~more exceptions than there are more~~ exceptions to the rule than there are instances of it. A logic which can deal with philosophical concepts at least, must be prepared to accommodate the overlap of classes, and to treat instances of the occurrence of overlapping classes not as infrequent aberrations, but rather as common and necessary, reflecting the normal operations of thought process.

Collingwood expects the staunch supporters of the inflexible system of traditional logic to make two objections to his demand that logic be modified to meet ~~the~~ conclusions arrived by a realistic appraisal of the nature of the philosophical concept. The first of these objections stems from what Colling-

wood calls the fallacy of precarious margins. The argument[#] goes that we ought to ignore apparent cases of the overlap of classes because they occur through the difficulty of reaching adequate definitions in certain areas of thought. This difficulty does not arise frequently at all in science al^l though there are instances where it does. This is the same thing as saying that in certain areas of thought the distribution of instances among classes breaks down, but it is perhaps a more euphemisticall^y way of phrasing it.

The second argu^ment he expects to be brought against him he calls, the fallacy of identified coincidents. Here the argu^ment goes that where an instance seems to fall into two concepts it is really due to a false separation into two what is in reality only one concept.²¹ It is not difficult to appreciate the scale of Collingwood's attack ^{on traditional logic} as a philosophical tool. First, he denies meaning to propositions taken by themselves. Second, he denies ^{the proposition} that no individual may at the same time be an instance of two classes relating to the same characteristic. He remarks of traditional logic, "Everyone who has digested Locke's Essay knows that it is a great mark of folly to over-estimate the value of logic, or to think that anything can be done with it than cannot be done just as well without it."²²

21 He recalls Aristotle's formula for the overlap of classes: "... the two concepts 'are the same thing' in the sense that a thing which exemplifies the one exemplifies the other also, but 'their beings is not the same' in the sense that being an instance of the one is not the same as being as instance of the other. The traditional way of refering to this principle is to speak of a 'distinction without a difference'. Collingwood, R. G., An essay on philosophical method, Oxford, Clarendon, 1950, p. 49.

22 Collingwood, R. G., The new leviathan, Oxford, Clarendon, 1944, p. 377.

This statement would be quite inappropriate to work in the field of science. But it is more appropriate where the temptation to carry over that method from its own province to the whole world of knowledge must be fought. It is all very well for physics to be concerned with ice, liquid water and steam, since it is not the generic essence that varies there. But if this analogy is carried over into a discussion of, say, the familiar Platonic scale of forms of 'ignorance', 'opinion', and 'Knowledge' the inflexibility of traditional logic is revealed in its inability to deal with these cases in which it is the very essence itself which is variable; and thus the higher and lower forms can not be equally species of the genus, the lower ones being barely capable of being considered species at all, and in traditional logic, of course, each instance of the species must exemplify fully the particular characteristic of the genus. Science is able to avoid some of the cases of conflict which arise in ordinary conversation by reducing the distinction to mathematical terms wherever possible. For example, instead of talking about colours, they talk in science about wave length or frequency, expressing colour in terms of Angstrom units. And there is a temptation to accept this solution which science offers in some cases wherever a case of the overlap of classes threatens to occur. But this is not possible in philosophy where ordinary usage and serious reflection both indicate that here the diminishing presence of a certain characteristic finally results in a distinction and the recognition of a second term, for example, again good and bad.

It has been too much to expect that the same logic which serves well in the natural sciences should serve without modification equally well in philosophy. Both of Collingwood's suggestions for the correction of the ground rules of logic are directed toward weaknesses which ~~were~~ known for a long time, have indeed been inherent in scientific rules of thought since, in the first instance, the Socratic dialectic, and in the second since Plato and Aristotle both concerned themselves with the principles of correct thinking. Collingwood's own treatment makes a model philosophic submission: he puts his case lucidly and briefly, anticipating objections from those who would make scientific method sovereign in all provinces of thought, and rightly predicts that the elevation of method over subject would ipso facto reduce philosophy to the analysis of concepts and art to second-rate criticism. Logic is properly not master but servant.

The mind does not work, in fact, in the pattern of the syllogism alone, in the image of Greek science. Everyone who has studied logic knows that it does not parallel the syntax of everyday speech². The problem is not solved by simply declaring that people today do not speak or think correctly. The difficulty is rather divided between the fact that the words that we use have more than one meaning; the classificatory structure which is the basis for formal logic is not to be found underlying the language of everyday communication, and the fact is that the overlap of classes is a com-

monplace of everyday conversation. More than that, we talk not according to a mechanics of logic, but in terms of our thoughts, our states of mind, our reflections. We are attempting to convey something which does not really entirely belong to the public library of concepts, for ~~there~~ is something unique about them. Nobody quite understand us.

Formal logic, invariably presented not ~~merely~~ as the proper ~~way~~ of speaking, but as the correct way of thinking, suggesting that what happens in the mind is the putting of the major premise, the sotto voce minor premise in antiphonal response and the mind becomes conscious in happy surprise of the (tautological) conclusion. It must be readily conceded that such analytic deduction does take place, but it would be a difficult task to undertake to prove ~~that~~^{the} ordinary thought for everyday decisions without becoming hopelessly involved in logical realism. This sort of theory has no place for the continual change always taking place in language as we stretch and strain it to accomodate new meaning, and thus actually and perenially are engaged in building new languages. Any attempt to provide a corrective univocal and stable language would be simply to add another scientific and artifical language which would inevitably tend to husk every evidence of in/dividuality ~~from~~ thought and, releasing the bare concept in shere uniformity, remove all that we meant, indirectly, to communicate. How often do we wish to communicate more than we can, or more than we choose to say? More often than not. To deprive speech of

the richness of indirect communication is to rob men of their individuality and thus to deprive them of the essence of their real nature as person.

But this is a universal characteristic of science, this tendency to reduce ~~the~~ individual, the really existent fact to an instance of a class. It is necessary and inevitable. But it is abstraction, and in that it is the mother of deception, for nothing that science talks about really is as it is employed, described, predicted, related, in science. For science employs not the facts of experience but the facts of abstraction as the grist in its mill. And it because of this reduction of individual to scientific instance that the application of science to any other province of knowledge is the use of a net with mesh too large to catch the fish.

But Collingwood holds that when the scientist realizes explicitly that the laboratory fact is not the fact of experience and sees it as an expurgated, emasculated fact, he will realize too that it must be made whole, and will rise to the next mode of the apprehension of truth, where facts are the unique, full, and rich facts of nature.

Science, is then a mode of the apprehension of truth. True, it is a limited truth, valuable for its utility, for its knowledge is that gained through the abstractive process of generalization. Its data is therefore in a sense unreal. Moreover science expresses itself ~~only~~ in an artificial language, which is explicit and clear, but cold and unnatural, though it is ideally

suitable for the communication of the cold and unnatural propositions of science. It is not, however, adequate to deal with the everyday exchange of life, nor with art, religion, history or philosophy. Every effort to include these fields in the dominion of science must therefore be resisted, not because science does not yield knowledge, but because it does it at a price which art, religion, history and philosophy cannot afford to pay, and any such arrangement must end in bankruptcy.

CHAPTER FIVE: HISTORY AS KNOWLEDGE

The fourth in the ascending scale of modes of apprehension of truth is history. Collingwood, though he seems at home anywhere in the world of thought, has a peculiar affinity for history. He began the study of history^{early}; he was only six or seven years old when he first began to tug away on the knotted skein of the past. His primary interest was ^{originally} in naval battles and tactics, and he mentions discovering early that the only way to understand such a matter as the tactics employed at Trafalgar was to try to put himself in the place of those in command. As he grew older, he clung to this concern for the interpretation of historical fact in terms of meaning, refusing to be satisfied with history as a mere catalogue of events. This point of view about history, indeed even the concern for history in the exact sense, is a relatively new thing and was not shared by many of Collingwood's contemporaries. It was then still the generally^{accepted} practice of 'historians' to spend most of their effort on the careful gathering and arranging not of original material, but of the opinions of ancient authorities. Concern for the past was not expressed in an eager search after new truth, but the attitude toward history was such that it was for the most part divided between contemptuous neglect and nostalgic pastoral idealizations of certain periods as golden ages. A good deal of history, so called, had been written to support propositions in favor, come what may.

There was at that time no historical methodology taught at Oxford at all. Further, not only was there little effort to recover information about the past, it was virtually a point of honour that everything written by the authorities of the right school must be taken at face value, no matter how obviously it might be in error.

The method used by 'historians' Collingwood calls the scissors and paste method. It called for little on the part of the historian save for a little moralizing and commentary. He was thus more of an editor than he was a historian. Peoples of earlier ages, too, had failed to see the need for an approach designed to meet the special need of historical study. With the stimulation of the natural sciences, however, and the subsequent growth of positivism in the sixteen and seventeenth centuries, Biblical criticism beginning with Baur and Strauss alerted a few to the need and possibilities of a new historical methodology. In the eighteenth century people began to think a bit critically about the history presented to them as authoritative, as science had led them to look enquiringly at the world about them.. With Rousseau and Herder a movement of sympathy toward past ages began, and historians began to take an active interest in the values and achievements of those who worked long before. The work of Vico went unnoticed, unfortunately, and there was no available historical methodology to harness the interest of the few.

It is not too much to say that one comes to the work of a philosopher of history with somewhat greater confidence if it is patent that the philosopher does indeed know something of

history. Collingwood was not a philosopher with an historical side-line, nor yet an historian~~#~~ with pretensions toward philosophy. He was at the same time a profound and provocative original philosopher and an able historian and ranking archaeologist. He began his explorations in archaeology by assisting his father, and later explored several British sites on his own, producing a book used as a text in British schools and several other works. He found great pleasure in this work; he was peculiarly suited for it. And in his archaeologic~~ic~~al investigations, the laboratory of historical enquiry, he found that digging and inventory yielded little new information of consequence to be added to the store of knowledge unless specific questions were asked about the use, purpose, design, material and so on, of an object unearthed. Simply digging to see what might be found was worse than a waste of time, for it hampered the work of an able man who might follow. Thus he proved to himself that "knowledge comes only by answering questions, and ... these questions must be the right questions asked in the right order".²³

What Collingwood pressed for was not only an accuracy of record among archaeologists, including detailed notes on the position and location of the various finds within the excavation site, he advocated a complete change in attitude, from that of collector to that of detective. Working with the raw materials of historical enquiry, Collingwood saw that this approach in

²³ Collingwood, R. G., Roman Britain, Oxford, Clarendon, 1937, and The Archaeology of Roman Britain, London, Methuen, 1930. Collingwood thought highly of Haverfield, author of The Romanization of Britain and of Rivers, but he regarded Mommsen and Ward as two horrible exponents of the treasure hunt technique.

practice yielded results where the haphazard traditional methods failed. Collingwood applied his principle that knowledge is a matter of question and answer very widely, and not only to the province of archaeology. Indeed he applied it to the Albert Memorial with somewhat inconclusive results, and to the principles of logic with more far-reaching results. The technique itself, at least as old as the Socratic dialogues, was the basis of the Platonic dialectic. This questioning activity is the mark of the mind in fertile outreach; it is often referred to by Collingwood as 'the cutting edge of knowledge', and the mark of intelligence is to know, it seems intuitively, what question to ask next.

In science this technique is as old as the first hypothesis, but has been ^{recently} ~~recently~~ called 'supposal'. Supposal, Collingwood suggests, is very close to art, in that it is the suspensions of assertion. Supposal, the activity of questioning, of wondering whether, however, looks both backward and forward in science; that is, it looks backward toward a body of fact, of questions already answered, and forward toward a new answer. In art supposal starts, whether the artist is aware of it or not, from a body of fact and experience but it does not much care whether its supposition is affirmed or denied. Assertion, in science and art both, is suspended, in art, indefinitely, in science it hangs in anticipation. Science, then, is no longer to be thought of as cataloguing the laws of nature, but rather as a questioning activity leading to the understanding of the significance of historical fact. "Science is the question whose answer is history." ²⁴

and the true scientist is in a sense really a historian, working to direct the light of attention on certain historical facts by a questioning activity in order to elucidate their significance. As a scientist he works to isolate, classify and determine the relations of the event, but as an historian he must realize, when the matter rises to the level of his conscious reflection, that he is aware that there is much in the ground and source of the event with which he does not by choice and necessity deal. The chemist's account of the burning of the Hindenburg is not at this level simply 2H_2 plus O_2 yields $2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ plus heat.

The question that both the historian and the scientist are both most apt to ask is perhaps, 'Why?' The question of cause for both the scientist and the historian is a matter of relation. In what sort of circumstances will this and this happen? The question in both cases, for the historian and for the scientist, goes beyond the event in the ordinary sense, for neither can find any event that can in all its background and ramifications be thoroughly known and understood in itself. For each question that is raised and answered, many supplementary questions go unasked and unanswered. The difference between the viewpoints of science and history with regard to these derivative questions is that although they arise legitimately enough for both, the scientist is bound to declare many of them out-of-bounds in order that his enquiry may progress at all, while the historian must regard all of his as patently relevant and regret his failure to answer any of them, for this may to a degree vitiate the un-

derstanding of any part.

One group in particular, however, object strongly to this generalization so ardently supported by Collingwood, the generalization that knowledge based on enquiry pursued by the dialectic of question and answer is the only real knowledge. This group is the positivists. The positivists, understandably enthusiastic about the results of the scientific method, were convinced that this method which had accomplished miracles in science was the only true path to knowledge. What, to Collingwood's mind, made their design all the more unfortunate was his conviction that the positivists were not correct, at least not up to date, in their conception of scientific method. Collingwood argued that, in point of fact, scientific method proceeded in accord with the very method he himself was advocating and not at all in the manner which the positivists assumed. In other words, the positivists were attacking in the name of scientific method the very method which was in fact the method of the scientist. He argued that a scientist did not begin by accumulating a mass of facts and then attempt to discover the way, if any, in which some of the were related to others. He rather asked, 'What is the relation between blood pressure and the secretions of the various ductless glands?', - "Will doubling the number of turns on a generator armature double the current produced, or will it perhaps double the voltage?'

Even if the positivists were correct in their view of scientific method, they could not apply that method to history. To accept the view that the method of positivism was the only method of enquiry able to end in truth would simply lead to the

denial of the possibility of historical knowledge. To begin with, fact does not mean the same thing to the scientist as it does to the historian. To a scientist fact may mean something given in immediate perception. But the fact with which the historian deals is not the same thing ~~indeed is not the same thing~~ at all. By fact the historian means something incomparably richer and fuller. Certain source materials may be immediately perceived, but surely the potsherd is not history, though it may be, in some peculiar positivist sense, a fact. The kind of facts that the positivist will recognize are not often to be found in historical research. The document, the bloody sword, the Rosseti Stone are not history, but only clues.

The fact that in the second century the legions began to be recruited wholly outside Italy is not immediately given. It is arrived at inferentially by a process of interpreting data according to a complicated system of rules and assumptions.... All this was entirely neglected by the positivist historians, who never asked themselves the difficult question: How is historical knowledge possible? How and under what conditions can the historian know facts which, by now gone and beyond recall or repetition, cannot be for him objects of perception.²⁴

The positivist historian's methodology is forced to claim that each historical 'fact' must be grasped by an individual act of cognition, that each fact must be independent of each other fact, and independent of the historian. These requirements cannot be met. And yet there is historical knowledge.

Collingwood's understanding of the relationship of the historian to the data at his disposal is diametrically opposed

²⁴ Collingwood, R. G., The idea of History, ed. Knox, T. M., Oxford, Clarendon, 1946, p. 132.

to that supported by the positivists. Rather than emphasizing the independence of fact and historian, Collingwood argues strongly that the data does not in a sense become fact until it is apprehended with all its relations, causes and effects, in the experience of the historian. History must be perpetually alive. Once dead, the corpse is the property of mere science until it is brought to life again by the participation of the historian.

The 'rational' coherence of history, the emphasis of the participating mind, is not new, of course. Collingwood writes of Kant's errant disciple, Schiller, with complete approval:

...he does not stand over against the facts as mere objects of cognition; on the contrary, he throws himself into them and feels them imaginatively as experiences of his own.²⁵

But the idea of reason as the dynamic and directive power behind the events of history as revealed in the Hegelian system has proven more often a stumbling-block than a step up. One cannot help wondering if it does not prove to be one for Collingwood as well. As V. Pareto has so clearly shown, a large proportion of human actions are non-rational. Must not Collingwood bar all non-reflexive action from the field of history? He cannot do so, but fortunately he himself uses the broader base of experience rather than the narrow foundation of reason on which to build. And thus he is able to recall Vico's sum-

²⁵ Ibid., p. 104

mation: verum et factum convertuntur.

Human history is human factum: and therefore its verum is available to the human mind. And anything which pretends to be history but is not that which lies behind action and decision is merely pseudo-history, scientific fact or groundless myth, masquerading as history. "I explained this new conception of history in the phrase - 'all history is the history of thought'. You are thinking historically, I meant, when you say about anything, 'I see what the person who made this, wrote this, used this, designed this, &c. was thinking'."²⁵ In reconstructing the past in his own experience the historian does not relive old myths, re-enact the homoletic dramas laid down by the ancient authorities. He works from the inarticulate source material at his disposal. It need not be said that the deduction from data is more likely to accurate than is the twice-told-tale.

If we accept the point of view which Collingwood advocates, that there are no mere events in history, but that history rediscovers again the background of a past age relived, - the purpose of the action, its meaning and effect on those it touched, then in some sense all history is contemporary history. And it also means that history is probably not equally available to all people, or that, at any rate, it is very, very difficult for most people to become historians in this fuller sense. For not everyone has the ability to enter into the past, to feel, think and act in the manner of the people of a by-gone age. Indeed, it is very difficult for anyone. Collingwood testifies to

²⁵ Autobiography, p. 110.

the 'travail of historical 'reincarnation' of Vico, perhaps the first historian to bring to life in himself in this way the life and time of a distant past.

The great effort which had to be made, and actually was made by Vico, in order to penetrate the point of view of primitive psychology is expressed in his language about "grave difficulties" entailed by his labour of fully twenty-five years in the attempt to "stoop from these civilized natures of ours to those absolutely wild and savage minds, which we cannot picture to ourselves at all, and can only understand with great toil. 26

But to understand the past fully, can there be any other course open to us than to attempt to look at people through their neighbours' eyes, or indeed to share with them the pondering of alternative courses of action within their minds? Surely participation in the past in this way is the only key to its comprehension.

The only question that remains, of course, is the obvious one: Is it possible? It is no doubt true that every historical event has (unlike the events of nature) an inner side. It is no doubt true that we can as human beings enter into the states of mind and emotions of others to a varying degree. But as to whether or not we are able to bring from the imagination against the backdrop of all that is known of a situation the very thoughts which lay behind the actions of the principals with any degree of certainty one must have grave reservations. That is, it is all very well to say that one may think thoughts like theirs, to say, they probably thought something like this, or to say, under these circumstances I should think this. ^eThere are certainly, however, factors which we must be ignorant of.

The nature of the principal's character cannot be known through

26 Croce, B., The philosophy of Giambattista Vico, tr. Collingwood, R. G., London, Latimer, 1913, p. 45.

and through, for example, for it will change in some degree with his disposition and health from day to day! For Collingwood's thesis to stand up, it is not enough that one should be able to think similar thoughts, but one must think the same thoughts over again. Absolutely certain historical knowledge is not to be gained in this way over the whole field of the past, and perhaps over none of it.

And yet it is true, that having used every scientific means for arriving at all the information one can about the 'outside' of an event in history, a sympathetic attempt to get inside the event by participation adds a new dimension to one's understanding of it. There is no infallible intuitive faculty to conjure up in one the past again exactly as it was, but history cannot be understood at all without an attempt to realize Collingwood's unfortunately unattainable ideal. Thus Collingwood is right in his claim that 'history is an autonomous form of thought with its own principles and its own methods' and not science at all, for while it uses the resources of science it goes beyond them.

A further word of caution should be appended here: Collingwood is quite explicit in pointing out that it is not sensation that we recapture, but thought. We cannot enter into the stream of consciousness of the principal of our concern. Thought, however, he believes, stands outside of the stream of consciousness, or perhaps above it. It is impossible to recapture ephemeral sensation, but thought stands out-

side of time. It does seem to be true that we are aware of our thoughts in a different way from that in which we are conscious of our sensations and emotions. This whole area is a very difficult one indeed. There are times when it appears that Collingwood seems to think of the recapturing of the historical past in thought in a way analogous to the way in which persons in different ages might entertain the Pythagorean theorem, but he must surely mean more than this, or his cause is lost.

In Collingwood's opinion, all history is revelation. Following Vico, he has agreed that man can only understand fully that which is his own creation. Since history, in Collingwood's use of the term, is by definition the sum of human activity from the beginning, it is man's creation, and the way to perfect understanding is open to him. (The only difficulty being the practical one that history cannot be fully understood piecemeal.) Because history is the creation of man, and nature is not, history can be very much better understood than nature can be, and therefore the knowledge derived from nature will be superficial where it is accurate, and erroneous where it attempts to be profound, and the knowledge derived from history will be intimate and reflexive knowledge, a more reliable knowledge and ultimately more useful.

But this knowledge is not to be obtained lightly, by merely noting down and summing up human activity. It is not the bare facts of history, the way in which scientific history looks at the past, which are revealing, it is the mind of the actors in the drama. And the thoughts which they entertain.

and which are the motives for their actions must be apprehended, - apprehended by participating in them. But most important of all for Collingwood, in this participation in the thoughts of others in history we not only apprehend their thoughts but we come to know our own minds more precisely as well. In looking into the inside of historical fact we are lead to Collingwood's ultimate goal for philosophy, the self-knowledge of the mind. Thus by the study of history in this broad sense, the mind of the individual is revealed to him by the apprehension of the thoughts of others.

Asked why the mind must consider the thoughts of others in order to reach the desired goal of self-knowledge, Collingwood would not only reply that the scope is larger, that there is more material, that there is less likelihood of self-deception, and so on, he would reply that this is the only way in which the mind can with any facility become the object of its own reflection, and that it is in the participation in the thoughts of others that the mind undergoes growth and matures. In ~~the~~ apprehending the thoughts of others, in its growing self-knowledge it creates itself anew.

This is, of course, a part of his subjective-idealist position, and most persons will not want to go this far with him. But in the broad sweep of history in Collingwood's interpretation of it, we see ourselves and our race revealed. We see our own capacities for good and for evil, we see challenge met and temptation yielded too, triumph and failure, progress and decline, loyalty and treachery, and so throughout

the catalogue of judgement. And history is revelation, and Revelation: for whatever God or gods are operative in human affairs, their activity can only be known with some degree of objectivity through the study of history. And of what consequence are gods who are not involved in the affairs of men?

History as revelation, the revelation of ourselves to ourselves, yielding absolute knowledge of ourselves, is an idea which on investigation soon serves as a valuable corrective to Pollyanna views of human nature. While it is true that in all fields, except that of the education of educators, the dogma of the inevitability of progress has been temporarily scotched, it is nevertheless true that it seems to remain as a presupposition in the background of a good deal of modern thought. History not only leads to the rejection of the belief in inevitable progress, it also leads to the recognition of some of the general conditions under which progress is most likely to be made. A somewhat more general discussion of progress may be found in the recapitulation.

To the Christian philosopher, the idea of history as revelation will not be a new one; but Collingwood's treatment brings a new emphasis. The Christian will likely be already accustomed to the idea of thinking^{of} history as a vehicle of the Revelation of God. Since history takes place for him in God's Creation and among his Created, and since he regards God's hand as being at work in history (even if perhaps only through the agency of his servants), the study of history clearly ought to be instructive, not only in order that he might learn something about the nature of man, but also in order that he might learn

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 might learn something about the nature of his God. This is an ancient Hebrew insight. The Hebrews turned again and again to history, especially to 'the mighty acts of God', and to Exodus first of all, as the Christian turns to the Passion. The didactic nature of a good deal of their history as we find it written in the Old Testament is presented in that vein, not because they wanted to use history as a package for the delivery of religious and ethical pronouncements, but because they were confident that the assertions and judgements which they were setting down were those which God himself was setting forth in the events. Thus it must be admitted that though they brought their presuppositions to their interpretation of history, yet they would be first to echo the new maxim, 'let the facts interpret themselves'. Perhaps they didn't go about the business of interpreting the nature and content of God's Revelation in history in quite the most objective way, nevertheless they were right in assuming that if the gods play no part in human affairs there is no point in taking them into account in one's thinking. Given the acknowledgement of the existence of God, where else should we look to learn of him?

If the obverse of the coin is that all history is revelation, the reverse is that all revelation is history; that is to say, all knowledge for Collingwood is historical knowledge. By this he means that knowledge which is concrete, full and complete knowledge, - not the abstracted knowledge of science, is knowledge of historical fact culminating at length in the self-knowledge of the mind. As far as Revelation is concerned, this is

a restatement of the conclusions of Biblical criticism. Christianity, like Judaism and Islam, has repeatedly claimed to be rooted and grounded in history and human experience. Its Revelation is apprehended by particular persons then and there. Revelation is given in experience and experience is the fact of history, lifted to the level of reflection.

If all Revelation is historical experience, two things seem to follow: First, if Collingwood is right, Revelation occurring in individual experience ought to be available to other individuals, that is, they must be able to enter into it by the same sympathetic participation that enables us to understand other historical events fully. Thus the content, for example of the books of the Old Testament Prophets must not only be read, but the events must be participated in if the Revelation is to come fully and plainly to life again in our own minds. Secondly, the assertion that all Revelation is historical revelation admits the limitations and presuppositions of the culture of the age in which the events concerned take place. Thus because Revelation is historical revelation we should not expect the writers of Genesis to agree upon a twentieth century view of geology and paleontology, or St. Paul to support a view favoring the emancipation of either women or of slaves. Collingwood's stimulus ought therefore to encourage and ~~an~~ increased knowledge of general history, and of Biblical history as well.

History, then, for Collingwood is a mode of the apprehension of truth, and a most significant one, because it leads the historian intimately into the knowledge of other minds.

breaking the bonds imposed on the mind by the attempt to apply universally the scientific method. But as one leaves this Chapter, lingering doubts remain over the possibility of the certainty of knowledge which Collingwood promises in the realm of historical knowledge by his method. Even though the distinction between knowing 'the insides of the events' has been made, and one understands that it is knowledge of the mind rather than knowledge of abstracted fact that Collingwood seeks, still the doubt must remain. Certainty could only be achieved if all of history could be contained in one knowing mind.

It is quite evident now that the only object which can really be known in a non-scientific concrete way is history as the thoughts of individuals. The ideal of universal history is forever unattainable.

We know at last in history what we never knew before, namely, what kind of object it must be that is alone knowable. It must be an object not merely of imagination, like the work of art, but of thought; but, like the work of art, it must be concrete and individual. It must be, like the object of religion, absolute and eternal; but unlike this again, it must be a real object and not the imaginative or metaphorical presentation of an object. It must be conceived like the object of science; but it must not be an abstraction. And like the object of history, it must be fact, an absolute concrete individual; but it must be accessible to the knowing mind.²⁷

The world of fact which is explicitly studied in history is therefore implicitly nothing but the knowing mind as such.²⁸

²⁷ Speculum Mentis, p. 239.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 245.

CHAPTER SIX: PHILOSOPHY AS KNOWLEDGE

There are two general routes for philosophers to walk. One path leads from concept to concept in the analysis of their meanings and their inter-relationships, and if the sign over the gate reads a priori path it will not be too misleading. The second, the lower path, named traditionally the a posteriori path leads through the analysis of experience and then upward. The first route has difficult going through the bog of speculation about how the concepts came to be in the first place. The second path leads across a treacherous shale slide area when it has to explain how it is possible to generalize upon individual experience without leaving behind that which makes ~~them~~^{it} individual experience. It is this conundrum that has led the positivists to emphasize the distinction between private and public worlds. That part of our experience which it is possible to share with one another in terms of scientific description, and which we can treat by means of scientific method is a public world of science and knowledge. That part which cannot be so communicated is a private world to which science and therefore knowledge has no relevance.

Collingwood's feeling is that a great deal more of our experience can be communicated and is therefore a part of a public world - than the positivists, with their narrow conception of the function and versatility of language, like to admit. It is a fact of everyday experience that persons do

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carry on conversations about many areas of experience, including religion, which the positivists say we have no right to talk about. By the sympathetic entry into one another's experience we bridge the chasm of individualism and uniqueness. So that if we can take the a posteriori route, bearing always in mind Collingwood's injunction that we abjure abstraction and the type of induction based on it, and strive after knowledge not in the generalization but in the individual instance we may meet with some measure of success.

The logical place to start, Collingwood agrees, is with the cogito. Indeed, one starts with one's self and with Collingwood's subjectivism it is possible to argue that one really never gets further than one's self, for the end of philosophy is simply to know one's self, and to grow intellectually in the process of learning. The problems that we solve are not important in themselves, but only are they important as they help the mind to create itself. Thus the mind matures not by accumulating a body of wisdom, but by benefitting by the enlargement of itself involved in reaching the solution. It may be claimed in this context that every such intellectual excursion is a revelation in the same sense as it has been argued that all history is revelation, but one must regret that Collingwood found it necessary to dispense with the body of knowledge gained in the meeting of the day's problems so easily.

Here again Collingwood is helpful in his emphasis: the self-knowledge, the self-appreciation of the individual person is the goal of the Christian philosopher, too, in a time when man needs to find a place for himself among monstrous, humi-

liating machines, anonymous in a highly organized national life in which non-conformity seems an expensive fetish, dwarfed by an ever expanding universe. Collingwood's conception of history and philosophy focuses attention on the individual, the singular in the midst of this blurred picture and places him in the center foreground, as does religion. Herein lies the peculiar value of the existentialist position.

The Christian philosopher would have to insist, however, that an adequate understanding of the self cannot be reached without an understanding of man's individual and personal relationship to his God. It is the individual's awareness of his own uniqueness in the eyes of God that gives him the courage to assert his individuality, his singularity in the world. Collingwood is quite right in holding that this conviction of one's uniqueness is the result of historical experience, but his predilection toward subjectivism robs him of the only real bulwark of man's confidence in his singularity, his personal relationship with his God.

In Speculum Mentis, the realization that the object of knowledge is the thinking mind leads into the area of Philosophy. But significantly for his later work, there is very little change of subject matter, and virtually no change of attitude of mind necessary for the transition. "Philosophy, like history, is essentially the assertion of concrete reality, the denial of all/abstraction, all generality, everything in the nature of a law or formula." ²⁸

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Philosophy is thus the reflection upon the self-conscious thinking mind. This is not to erect again the dualism of a self standing over against a world of real objects with which philosophy is not concerned. Rather the self is what it is because of the relations it has with the world environment. This is not the abstract study of the mind itself, which would be psychology, but of the knowing mind, the mind in intelligent function which is alone intelligible. Subject and object are identified in the admission of the determination of the self by the world environment and that the world known is the world of the mind. This is plainly a form of phenomenology, perhaps the only tenable theory in the days of tables composed of electrical charges. The question of whether or not 'our world' picture is true does not arise. "The world really is what, errors apart, we take it to be." From this unexceptionable major premise, dogmatism gets conclusions by framing the minor premise 'in such and such a type of experience there is no error'. Collingwood holds that where dogmatism is found, there inevitably will abstraction be found, for some object or objects will be thought to be known directly, and not through the whole and complex function of self-conscious experience; for example, perception may be dogmatically asserted to be infallible because it is prior to the distorting activity of the 'higher' mental functions. It is very difficult to attack such dogmatism successfully, because of the dogmatist's assurance that he has a channel for error-free information which either is not open to the besieger, or is neglected by him.

Collingwood calls this knowledge^{of} self in true philosophy "absolute knowledge" not because it is secure from error: that is impossible; but because in it there is no element of necessary and insurmountable error, as there is in his appreciation of art, religion, science and history (in the restrictive sense) as modes of the apprehension of truth. It will be readily seen that in much of the above Collingwood has expressed an idealism much like that of Immanuel Kant. There are three important differences, perhaps among many, that ought to be pointed out at this time. First, and simply, he will have nothing to do with any positive assertion of the nature of existence of 'the thing in itself'. Secondly he has made a good attempt at making a place for error and even for evil in an idealist philosophy. In error, or in wrong action, the mind is creating as it is in learning truth and well doing, but in error the mind is determining itself in distortion and creating a nature which while distorted hides this from its awareness; it creates itself in one image while it thinks of itself in another. The resulting tension of conflict may make explicit the implicit contradiction, and the mind may put itself to right.

It is, he believes, this same tension which leads to the downfall of dogmatism. He holds that at each stage of development of the mind on the way to absolute knowledge a dialectical process is at work which is at every stage an implicit paradox arising from ^{one which was} ~~in~~ resolved in becoming explicit. The third marked difference from Immanuel Kant is in his conception of the nature of the mind: Kant believes the mind is limited by its nature, and must learn ^{to} recognize and live within its limi-

tations, while Collingwood believes that the mind creates and recreates itself, fashioning its own nature. Its only apparent limitation seems to be that it can only really know itself.

Some logicians have declared all universal propositions to be hypothetical only, something true, for example, of most or perhaps all scientific propositions. But philosophy differs from science in that its propositions are necessarily categorical, and not hypothetical at all. Thought cannot be conceived except as real and actual; and it is from this fact that the *cogito* gains its force. So that the declaration 'All ^{uni-}gen-
~~versal propositions~~
~~eralizations~~ are hypothetical' is a slightly sophisticated modification of the school-boy saw, 'All generalizations are false'.

The most remote and abstract generalizations perhaps fall into the field of ontology, which to Collingwood's horror, too many people mistake for the whole of metaphysics. To his mind the whole of ontology seems to consist of the generalization, 'Being is'. What more can be said of being, save that it is? Further, 'that being is' is hardly a conclusion, a proposition. It is, if it is anything significant at all, an absolute presupposition, and there's an end of the matter. For as an absolute presupposition is ~~by~~ definition not under judgement except as to whether or not in point of fact it ever was presupposed, there can be no debate. Truth or falsity are irrelevant.

This attitude of suspended judgement (familiar from our discussion of art) is of course not peculiar to absolute presuppositions in the field of ontology, but to all of them. And the true field of metaphysical investigation, and the only such field in Collingwood's opinion, is the raising of the question, 'Was

the absolute presupposition 'x' actually supposed by such and such a time and people, and if so what was meant by it?' 'How is it related to other contemporaneous presuppositions?' One cannot enquire into whether or not 'x' is really true; e. g., whether or not space is rectangularly shaped, to any purpose, though perhaps to enquire whether or not two presuppositions can be consistently held at the same time ought to be legitimate and fruitful, e. g. is it reasonable to hold at the same time that space is rectangularly shaped and that light is subject to gravitational attraction.

Metaphysical questions then, are properly concerned with absolute ⁱpresuppositions from an historical point of view, that is to say, from the point of view of whether or not they were absolutely presupposed by ~~the~~ these people at this time, and are not^{at} all concerned from Collingwood's view about whether or not they are true or false since this question does not arise. Collingwood puts it succinctly, "Metaphysics is about a certain class of historic facts".²⁹ All metaphysical propositions, therefore, he says should be prefaced by the 'metaphysical rubric', 'in such and such a phase of (such and such) thought, it was absolutely presupposed^s that.....'³⁰ This question is of a nature that will permit an answer of truth or falsity as a legitimate metaphysical proposition.

Metaphysics, of course, has its own presuppositions; the presuppositions of history. The chief one perhaps being that the past in fact and whole event can be recovered from

²⁹ Essay on Metaphysics, p. 61.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 55.

The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It is a summary of the work done and the results obtained. It is a general statement of the work done and the results obtained.

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participative interpretation of the best evidence preserved. It has been noted that the positivists are loath to grant this presupposition. They object to it on the grounds that it conflicts with their own absolute presupposition that facts are known directly by sense experience in such a fashion that the conclusions are immediately verifiable or they are not known at all. All metaphysics is nonsense, they cry, because metaphysics and its propositions are not capable of this verification. Collingwood says have it all wrong. Metaphysical absolute presuppositions are not verifiable just because they are not propositions (without the addition of the 'metaphysical rubric') and one cannot judge presuppositions as to truth or falsity. Metaphysical propositions (prefaced by the 'metaphysical rubric') are verifiable, in the sense that the data on which the deductions are based is available to anyone disciplined enough to read it. Further, if anyone's absolute presuppositions should be suspect, it is the positivists' which seem unreasonable and untrue to experience. It is very doubtful if the positivists can hold the position that knowledge is gained from direct and immediate sense experience without any thought or selection or arrangement of material by the mind except in the heat of argument or for publication. It seems very easy for a philosopher to lose touch with common sense and the witness of every-day experience, perhaps especially so if they tend to endanger his position.

It was the realists who were threatening philosophy when Collingwood began his formal study of philosophy at Oxford.

In 1910 the school of Green and its idealism pervaded the academic atmosphere. This school, led by T. H. Green, F. H. Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet, were commonly and, to a greater or lesser extent falsely, called Hegelians. While there was a definite and easily perceptible strain of Hegelianism in the school, it was really in the native English philosophical strain of succession from Locke, and this was the dominant influence. Their opponents, the realists, were really in the ascendancy by this time, but it was the 'Hegelian' idealism that was the centre of dispute, ~~and~~ the realists were chiefly concerned to demolish Green et alii ^{rather} than ~~they were~~ to occupy themselves in the construction of any pretentious philosophical structure of their own. The difficulty was, as Collingwood argues is so often the case, that the realists were not at all historically sensitive, and the idealists were hardly any better. The realists had never really grasped the idealist position, so that the idealists were not really under attack at all, - personally perhaps, but not their position. They supported what they believed Hegel really meant or ought to have said. The realists, even when they were not excitedly charging down straw men, had nothing important to say, for their out-moded science, left behind with the collapse of the eighteenth century scientific pre-suppositions, was an anachronism and of ^{no} use at all as a foundation for constructive thought.

Collingwood quite obviously intends to leave the impression that the realist school not only misinterpreted the ideal-

1st school, but indeed every other philosopher they undertook to investigate in order to condemn. It was all very well for the realists to review what others said, or were saying: this was the study of history. It was all very well for the realists to disagree and attack what others had said or were saying, once they were sure of their history; but to do this was to make philosophical affirmations as they made their denials. For as Collingwood makes clear, in philosophy at least, to deny something is to affirm something else. The realists, especially, confused the two questions of history and philosophy. They failed to enter into the sympathetic rapport with an author that would enable them to be clear about what it was that he was saying. And then having misconstrued his propositions they would argue philosophically whether or not his absolute pre-suppositions (in Collingwood's terminology) were true or false, which was really again an historical question.

Spearheading the positivist's attack was the new psychology with its emphasis on simple apprehension, the individual, unrelated perception. They accepted simple apprehension as the ultimate in concreteness and reality, the primary whole or unitary item of knowledge. These atoms of knowledge are not related to any mental event, to any knowing process, or any thing (object) known. It is therefore indeed a very simple, very abstracted, very futile psychology. At first sight, when the examples are such as 'I see a red surface', 'This object is cool' there is perhaps a casual credibility to it, "where familiarity with the mental operations involved has bred not so much

contempt as oblivion."³¹ But a moment's reflection recalls that this is not in fact how knowledge is gained. We do not see a red surface, we see a red ball, or a red curtain. We are not aware of unorganized sense experience ordinarily. And when we do become aware of unorganized sense experience we are also immediately aware that this is not a simple act of knowing, but we are immediately aware of the simple fact and questioning¹⁷ of ignorance, - what is it? We feel unbalanced by the upsetting experience of 'unexplained' sensation. Of course knowledge goes beyond simple apprehension. But this is not to say that all that is assumed beyond the limits of simple apprehension is properly knowledge, there are here the absolute presuppositions, - not known, but the implicit structural principles employed in the erection of the body of knowledge. If it were not for them, knowledge would certainly not advance beyond the most simple recognition and organization of perception. The positivists "were proud to have excoagitated a philosophy so pure from the sordid taint of utility that they could lift their hands and say it was no use at all...."³² It was an orphan child, isolated from history in that it could not come to grips with what others had actually thought and meant, and in that it could not come to grips with history as historical fact, as unabstracted whole.

³¹ Autobiography, p. 26. Collingwood believes that psychology should be confined to the study of sensation and feeling, Cf. The new leviathan, pps. 10-18, and Collingwood, R. G., Religion and philosophy, London, Macmillan, 1916, pp.14f.

³² Autobiography, p. 51

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One of the reasons why the positivists may have seemed to be justified in their attack on philosophy is that philosophy doesn't seem to be very successful, at least in so far as bringing new knowledge into being, to match the progress of science in its field. Collingwood defends philosophy by pointing out that in this regard the philosopher in his conception ought to claim so little, for philosophy ought to be concerned only to make explicit the presuppositions before only implicit in our thought.

The terms implicit and explicit are full of significance in Collingwood's writings. In this discussion of the 'sequence' of art, religion, science, history and philosophy, for example, he explains art as containing within itself and implicit contradiction; art is revealed as a form of error because it believes itself to be, or to be the product of, pure imagination. But pure imagination never occurs. When art, therefore, believes explicitly that it is not arising from any reference at all it deceives itself, for the imagination must always rise from the ground of experience, of history. As soon as this implicit contradiction is discovered, art is in a sense overcome, and the province of religion is entered. But religion, too, contains an implicit error. Religion knows, unlike art, that it is asserting something; it thinks that its meaning is clear. But the language of religion is the language of symbolism. It mistakes the symbol for the reality behind it. Once this implicit error is made explicit, he says, the error of religion is risen above and the realm of science, which recognizes the

the symbolic nature of language is entered. Science harbors another implicit error: science is in error in thinking that the facts with which she deals are real facts, when in truth they are poor abstracted, emasculated shadows of facts. Once this implicit error is surmounted it becomes explicit and the search for facts in their completeness leads to history. But, history, too, has implicit difficulty, for seeking to see all the facts in their myriad relationships she is disillusioned by the impossibility of completely understanding the whole of history entire, and by the knowledge that unless she can do so she can never fully understand any single fact. Once this situation becomes explicit the way to philosophy is open, and absolute knowledge may be found in the understanding of the only fully available object, the knowing mind.

And in general what we call philosophy reveals explicitly the principles which are implicit in what we call everyday experience. To suppose that a principle which is really present in a given experience must be explicitly present in it - to deny implicitness in general - is either to confuse art with art-criticism, religion with theology, ... or else to deny all connexion between these pairs of activities ... and to make incomprehensible the transition that is always taking place from one to the other.³³

One difficulty which Collingwood sometimes seems to overlook, is that not all implicit contradictions or mere differences are resolved on their being made explicit; sometimes there is no 'step upward' to be taken and the difference or contradiction is retained in paradox.

Collingwood takes a paradoxical position himself with
 33 Speculum Mentis, p. 85f.

regard to the possibility of historical knowledge. While he sometimes laments that the inevitable ignorance of some historical facts vitiates the whole account with doubt and error, he nevertheless sometimes verges on the claim for the imagining, participating mind some sort of infallible intuitive faculty which is able to apprehend the truth despite the inadequacy of the factual record. Imagination has no such insight, nor has any other function of the mind, and it seems that Collingwood, carried to extremes of confidence in the superiority of history in which the historian participates over history as seen by a remote and impersonal observer, sometimes spoke as if the first revealed all truth and the second were a virtually useless cataloguing clerk of falsely related observations. His confidence in historical knowledge seemed to increase as he grew older, as he speaks with careful conservatism in most of Speculum Mentis, with increasing confidence in historical knowledge in the Essay on Metaphysics, and with ringing assurance in the Idea of History. And as his confidence in the possibility of historical knowledge increased, his estimate of philosophy as a separate mode of the apprehension of truth diminished.

The Essay on Metaphysics is a transitional work. The subject matter of philosophy has passed from Absolute Being, that is, that which can be absolutely known, as the knowing mind of Speculum Mentis, to 'Absolute Presuppositions' as discussed above. The business of philosophy has become the making explicit of implicit absolute presuppositions, and all philosophical questions are more than ever historical questions.

Now this view involves Collingwood in a thoroughgoing historical relativism. In subsuming philosophy under history, Collingwood pays a high price for respectability. It is a difficult thing to do to conceive of an idealist philosophy having a subject matter and methodology which preclude the possibility of elegant systems and eternal truths. One cannot help but wonder whether it is almost as shameful a thing to surrender philosophy to history as it is to surrender her to psychology. At the very least it ought to be possible for philosophy to make a survey legitimately to determine whether perhaps any presuppositions have been held by all people in all ages, or say in Western tradition, and to seek to establish, even if only inductively, a few generalizations.

It ought to be noted that in this scheme, not only are absolute presuppositions beyond the scope of enquiry into truth and falsity, they are beyond value judgement; that is, one cannot even say from a utilitarian or any other point of view that one is better than another. If one is not in a position to say whether or not such and such a presupposition is either true or profitable what hope is there of giving guidance to this generation. Collingwood's reply would be that the search after the implicit and hidden presuppositions so lifts the mind that this is sufficient gain and inherently worthwhile in itself.

"Nothing but the knower can be known,"³⁴ and language being what it is, he cannot express himself adequately. "It is more possible to refute a well argued case for idealism than
34 Ibid., p. 245.

it is to upset the man who persistently claims that 'It was revealed to me...' But it must be allowed that there is something unsatisfying about its complicated introspection.

For the life of the mind consists of raising and solving problems, problems in art, religion, science, commerce, politics and so forth. The solution of these problems does not leave behind it a sediment of ascertained fact, which grows and solidifies as the mind's work goes on. Such a sediment is nothing but the externality of a half-solved problem: when the problem is fully solved the sediment of information disappears and the mind is left at liberty to go on. Philosophy, therefore, is not a prerogative kind of knowledge immune from this reabsorption into the mind's being: it is nothing but the recognition that this reabsorption is necessary and is indeed the end and crown of all knowledge, the self-recognition of the mind in its own mirror.³⁵

It follows that the concrete life of philosophy is no mere haven of rest, but a ceaseless act of achieving.... The life of absolute knowledge is thus the conscious self-creation of the mind, no mere discovery of what it is, but the making of itself what it is.³⁶

Self-knowledge is desirable and important to man, not only for its own sake, but as a condition without which no other knowledge can be critically justified and securely held.³⁷

35 Ibid., p. 317

36 Ibid., p. 296

37 Collingwood, R. G., Human nature and human history, in "Proceedings of the British Academy, XXII, 1936, p. 97.

CHAPTER VII: THE LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE

Collingwood agreed at the outset that art, religion, science and history were to be accepted provisionally as the provinces of knowledge. But when the works are read, the caveat noted in each case, it is plain that there are serious qualifications limiting the scope and reliability of each. It is only in the fifth province, philosophy, that truth may be apprehended free from error and doubt.

Collingwood regards each of the first four provinces of knowledge as an unconscious philosophy of mind. In each instance he believes that the search after knowledge conducted ~~through~~ the mode of the apprehension of truth associated with that province is actually the mind seeking to achieve self-knowledge. The artist, the religious person, the scientist, the historian, he admits, would vehemently deny the allegation that they had mistaken the object of their search, and could not believe that they are really in search of themselves. This is not only understandable, but indeed inevitable, he feels, because this striving after self-knowledge is unconscious in these people. They firmly believe in the object of art, of religion, of science, and of history. If this were not so there could be no artist, religious person and so on, for these works depend upon unquestioning sincerity of purpose, and confidence in the belief that the goal can be obtained.

If the ostensible, but illusory, objects of these four provinces of knowledge are indeed specious, or at least only a-

chievable in the sense that they can be overcome, there must exist somewhere a root of implicit error in each of these modes, for to know, even to know well an illusion, is still to know only an illusion. So that art and the rest are philosophical errors, because they fail to see that the ostensible object of their knowledge is the self-knowing-mind, that the contents of their treasury of knowledge is vitiated with error because this knowledge is necessarily metaphorical. They are in error not because of faulty method or mechanics, but because they have chosen to assert in each case that their province of knowledge concerned an object which could be known with certainty, exactly and without any necessary error, as it really existed; that is, art, for example, insists that ~~that~~ while other provinces of knowledge are composed of minds striving after superficial truth, received in distortion, art alone knows the only real object of knowledge, the secret and the meaning of the universe, beauty. Each in turn insists that it has this special access to its object. But his, according to Collingwood, is the very essence of dogmatism, and these provinces of knowledge reveal themselves to be precisely forms of dogmatic philosophy; that is to say, a philosophy which declares that with respect to the object of its knowledge there is no necessary error or uncertainty.

This assumption, that with respect to the knowledge of this ~~object~~ there is no necessary error, is however not a philosophic proposition, but simply what Collingwood has called a metaphysical ^{absolute} presupposition. It is reached by some judge-

ment other than a properly philosophical one if it is thought out at all, and is not subject to challenge from the point of view of one willing to argue the truth or falsity of the matter, just as the religious person is not really willing or able to discuss the existence of God objectively and impartially.

The truth, which art, religion, science and history contain, they contain explicitly ^{as} metaphors~~ed~~ which they do not know to be metaphors; and implicitly in the unconsciously asserted object which is the referent of the metaph~~or~~. This truth is that which, he says, comes in the revelation of the mind in its self-creation. Collingwood thinks that in the setting forth of the ostensible object by the explicit action and intention of the pursuit of knowledge in each province, the metaphorically present, but trul~~y~~ present in the implicit and unconsciously developing real object of knowledge. These two object remain in tension in the artist and the others; the explicit object is retained as the ostensible and asserted object in the face of the tension only by an effort of will. It is only in philosophy, the fifth province, that truth is explicitly achieved in the error-free (in that sense that there is no necessary error) self-knowledge of the mind that absolute knowledge is possible. In knowing anything, what we really know is the mind. He denies that he is an idealist in the sense that he thinks the world unreal, or to be composed of bits of mind, but he adds, "None the less, my knowing them is organic to them:... it is because I know them that they can be what they really are."³⁸

He continues, to say that they are organic to him in the sense that if one part were destroyed, the whole would be destroyed. The mind creates the world it knows in creating itself. Now there is a very obvious sense in which this is true. But it is also true that knowledge must ultimately depend upon the assumption or presupposition that there is some real correlation between the world that is and the world as one conceives it. Even if we do know the world of the mind's creation ^{free of internal} error or distortion, we know only an object of our own creation which we assert as truth unless the mind's world closely resembles what we find it difficult not to call even in this context the real world.

He says:

Self-consistency, then, is our test, It might be suggested that a better test is suitability to our nature or the facts of the world: but this is a mistake, because we are raising then the question what is human nature? what are the facts of the world?³⁹

These are indeed difficult questions, and may prove finally unanswerable other than in terms of presupposition. But is self-consistence a sufficient test for truth? Indeed, if the creation of mind is not be entirely capricious it must be dependent upon two things; the limits and natural function of the mind, and the availability of reliable information about the external world. In order to judge the truth of anything do we not refer it to something else. Must we not? If we do not assume that this information is available we must yield any hope for truth.

39 Ibid., p.44.

Collingwood has condemned as dogmatism any claim for a special accessibility of knowledge for any object of truth seeking activity. He, himself, claims a special accessibility to the human mind. This at first sight seems creditable.

And yet it is not, for the mind known must be the mind in action, creating itself. This is not the mind in passive reflection considering itself. The mind remains as unconscious of itself in action as it is unconscious of itself in art, or religion or the others. Collingwood, in asserting that it is only the mind which we can know, becomes himself a dogmatist. Dogmatism may well be inevitable, and there may be no escape from it. 'The world is, errors excepted, what we take it to be, and there is no error with respect to the self-knowledge of the human mind.'

If we all might grow up in the maturing mind to philosophy there would be no art, no religion, no science, no history, as we know them now. For Collingwood has pointed out that these modes can be served only as long as artists and the rest remain in ignorance of the real object of their search and assertion. But if there were no art, no religion, no science, and no history, upon what would the mind feast. This would be a high price to pay for perfection. Indeed, can perfection be conceived without all five provinces. One finds it difficult to believe that growth of the mind in any of these fields leads a person out of it.

One of Collingwood's greatest emphases has been on the doctrine of the necessity for recognizing the overlap of clas-

ses. Perhaps he went wrong from the very beginning in his compartmental separation of the five provinces of knowledge. In the end he does admit that they are all maps of the same terrain, but they are not held simultaneously, but successively by any individual. It is surely the truth that beauty ~~is~~ to be found in religion, in the lucidity of science, in the process of history, in the elegance of philosophy. And is not religion to be found in beauty, in the revelation of the mind of God in science, in the tragedy of history, and in the promise of philosophy. Is science not welcome wherever it chooses to travel so long as she comes as an inquisitive helpmate rather than as a conqueror? All ~~knowledge~~ knowledge is historical knowledge, and all knowledge is grist to philosophy's mill. One feels that Collingwood was wrong in rejecting what he calls the medieval answer, and the modes of the apprehension of truth are not ~~not~~ such that only one may be employed at any stage of the mind's development, and that the selection of any one as the really absolute and ultimate mode is a matter of presupposition.

Collingwood deserves a good deal of credit for his discussion of the function of the imagination in supposal. It is only in philosophy that he makes no mention of it and its function. For here supposal can only be a means of error, for since the mind knows itself in creation of itself, and supposal is part of the function of self-creation, the mind may in this theory gratuitously suppose itself to be what it is not, and thus become something else than it was on a whim. Assuming that both are truly known, one has introduced an element of

caprice and it appears that one has come the full circle back to play and art!

The material on imagination is very suggestive indeed. Perhaps art might be interpreted not as a questioning activity as supposal in science is? Art would then be not an activity analogous to simply chattering symbolic language, but would be asking questions which it cannot answer, or which it is the place of the audience to answer, in participation. Philosophy and art may ask the same questions, philosophy requiring only the participation of the self, while art invites the participation of the world.

Another 'turning of the tables' on Collingwood, it might^{be} suggested, is to see if he does not do with history what he accuses the realists of doing with science: employ the presuppositions and method of history to the whole domain of knowledge. Art is denied meaning because it does not, being monadic, fit into a historical conception. Religion is labelled unconsciously metaphorical because it claims to transcend time and the process of history. Science is found to be abstract, as it is indeed, because its facts are not the full events of history, and philosophy is reduced in the later works to history because there must be no search in process for eternal truths or attempted solution of perennial problems, and historical relativism holds sway. (It would be the mark of a freshman philosopher to remark that this relativism must inevitably include his own philosophy.)

One other difficulty central in this theory of know-

ledge , which has already been mentioned, but which is too unwieldy for detailed discussion, is Collingwood's assertion that thought stands, unlike sense perception and emotion, outside the time process as eternal. Certain kinds of thoughts, which for the most part seem to be dependent upon logic and language, or on the nature of the mind, are beyond the influence of time, confer the mention of the Pythagorean theorem above. But Collingwood wishes to include far more than mathematics in this category. "Collingwood's type of theory", says J. Cohen, "postulates a quasi-Spinozist scientia intuitiva..⁴⁰," which is the mode of the apprehension of absolute and inerrant historical knowledge.

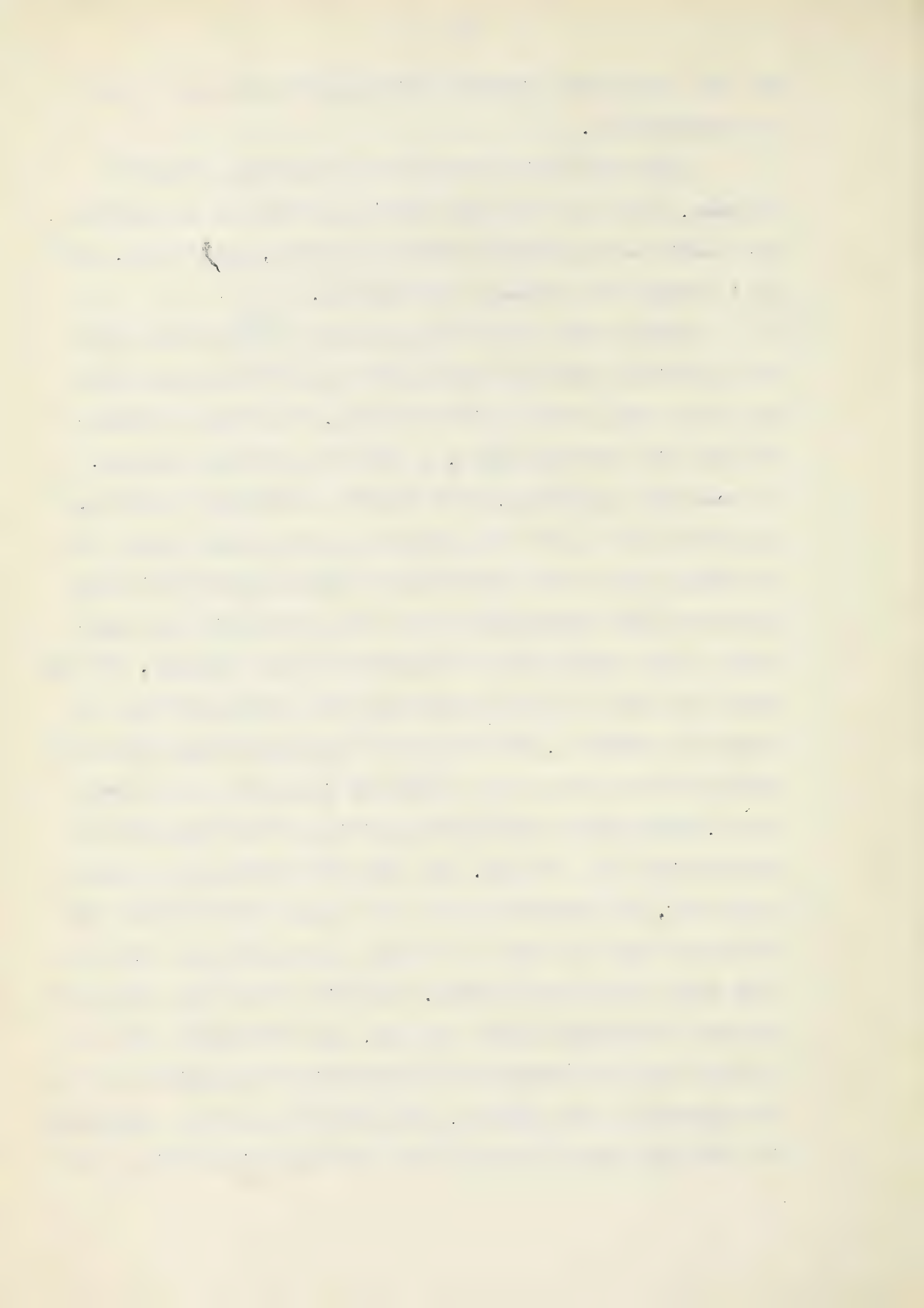
In final summary, it appears that Collingwood is in the main stream of English philosophers, that is to say he is in a real sense a descendent of Locke. All knowledge is based on experience, and the mind, starting with unreflective play begins the creation of itself, and as all experience is historical experience, all knowledge is historical knowledge. There is no effort to bridge the gulf between the mind and the outside world, and the doctrine that knowledge is finally possible only of the mind is put forward. The emphasis on concreteness over abstraction is frequent in Collingwood, of course, and his characteristically Lockian. Generalizations are always suspect for both, and the denial of the possibility of the attainment of absolute truth in Locke and the possibility of

40 Cohen, J., Philosophical surveys, V: Philosophy of History, in "The Philosophical Quarterly", The University of St. Andrews, Vol. 2, No. 7, April, 1952, p. 177.

it in a restricted field in Collingwood marks one of the few differences.

And while Locke served as an awakening stimulus to Kant, some may feel that Kant's answers are on the whole more satisfactory than are those of Locke, and indeed, more satisfactory than those of Collingwood.

Fortunately it is not necessary to ^{agree} altogether with the positions taken by Collingwood in order to appreciate and enjoy the power of his intellect, his fresh originality and his masterly style;- a model of profound insight, provocative suggestion, deft attack and defense in depth, together with a gift for synthesis on the grand style. It was suggested in the introductory chapter that Collingwood undertook the investigation into the possibility of knowledge in the provinces of thought for three reasons: (1) because it makes a great difference what presuppositions we place our faith in, and that while presuppositions that are absolute were later found to ^{be} beyond judgement as to their truth, nevertheless the presuppositions which support irrationalism are a danger, the peril with which he is most concerned, (2) because we are at a stage of historical development where we need to learn a great deal more from history than we do from science, and this cannot take place if history is subsumed under science, and (3) because the individual must be rescued from statistical anonymity and from the tyranny of the machine. He achieves his first objective in large measure by showing the presuppositions which give



support to irrationalist attacks on philosophy (and indeed indirectly even on science itself) are founded on the outmoded scientific method of the eighteenth century, but would be more effective if he could escape the charge of historical relativism and could show how the gap from the knowing mind to the known world is bridged. He succeeds very well in his second objective; that is, he is able to show that historical knowledge is more real in its concreteness than is scientific knowledge, and is therefore worthy of respect. Further, because history is concerned essentially (in his view) with events of the mind and thinking, it is poignantly relevant to man's condition. Finally, he does make his point that in the pursuit of knowledge of himself, rather than of the world around him, lies a man's hope of growing as an individual in wisdom and real worth.

These objectives, together with assistance in obtaining them, will be found on close examination also to be found among the metaphors of religion.

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